

STORIES

New,
Snappy,
Spicy!

PEP



JUNE
25¢

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PEP STORIES

VOL. 2, NO. 1.



"Can he really play?" a girl whispered.
 "Heavens, no," Arthur exclaimed.
 "He never played a note in his life."

They Laughed When I Sat Down At the Piano But When I Started to Play!—

ARTHUR had just played "The Rosary." The room rang with applause. Then to the amazement of all my friends, I strode confidently over to the piano and sat down.

"Jack is up to his old tricks," somebody chuckled. The crowd laughed. They were all certain that I couldn't play a single note.

"Can he really play?" I heard a girl whisper to Arthur.

"Heavens, no," Arthur exclaimed. "He never played a note in all his life. . . ."

I decided to make the most of the situation. With mock dignity I drew out a silk handkerchief and lightly dusted off the piano keys. Then I rose and gave the revolving piano stool a quarter of a turn. The crowd laughed merrily.

Then I Started to Play

Instantly a tense silence fell on the guests. I played the first few bars of Liszt's immortal Liebestraume. I heard gasps of amazement. My friends sat breathless—spellbound! I played on.

A Complete Triumph!

As the last notes of the Liebestraume died away, the room resounded with a sudden roar of applause. I found myself surrounded by excited faces. Everybody was exclaiming with delight—plying me with rapid questions . . .

"Jack! Why didn't you tell us you could play like that?" . . . "Where did you learn?"—"Who was your teacher?"

"I have never even seen my teacher," I replied. "And just a short while ago I couldn't play a note."

"Quit your kidding,"

laughed Arthur, himself an accomplished pianist. "You've been studying for years. I can tell."

"I have been studying only a short while," insisted. "I kept it a secret so that I could surprise you folks."

No Teacher Needed

Then I told them the whole story. "It seems just a short while ago that I saw an ad of the U. S. School of Music mentioning a new method of learning to play which only cost a few cents a day! The ad told how a woman had mastered the piano in her spare time at home—and without a teacher. The method she used required no laborious scales or exercises. It sounded so convincing that I filed out the coupon requesting the Free Demonstration Lesson.

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PEP



New, Snappy, Spicy Stories

VOL. II, No. 1

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Helen to Her Minstrel

Unless it be
Of love you sing,
Breathe no song
Of anything.



By
**Sidney King
Russell**

Unless it be
Of joys divine,
Of eager lips
(Like yours and mine;)

Hold your tongue
And let another
Sing the song
You idly smother!

Unless you softly
Sing of me,
Pray be silent
Utterly!



Entre-Nous

WUXTRA! WUXTRA! Has anybody seen or heard anything about Edna Crane Sidbury? Does anybody know where she parks her bathrobe and bedroom slippers? No, we're not getting personal! We mean right by Edna, and how! Do you remember the story **A COUPLE OF DARK SECRETS** in the May issue of **PEP STORIES**? Well, Edna is the author of that story.

Yes, but that isn't everything. Like all artists Eddie has a careless streak which is attributed to temperament and so she went and has completely left off her address. There's a check in my second desk drawer made out to her and if she doesn't hurry up and come through with her address, I'm afraid that a very particularly attractive hat I have in mind will soon be mine.

I ask you? Did you ever before hear of anyone forgetting to be around when the checks are distributed? It strikes us, that this Sidbury person ought to be a very good matrimonial bet. Anyway, the man that marries her (if she isn't already attached) won't have to worry about her getting up in the middle of the night and emptying his pockets of monies and otherwise.

We'll see what we can do about getting the low-down and then arrange matters for the one who writes the best letter. Sort of giving away things you know.

We've got the very nicest piece of gossip for this month. Of course it may get a little bald—but then what would you? It's about Teddy Talbot.

Now, would you ever think that a nice clean-minded girl like her (for of course she is just that) would come from such a narrow, prejudiced town like Altoona, Pa.? You see, it's like this: Teddy was an only child and at the time when she should have been learning the three "R's" she was busy helping Papa deceive Mama about his affair with her Governess.

Well, pretty soon Mama got wise and walked out with the town's richest banker. At this point she promptly forgot about Teddy, dubbing her an accomplice. Exit Mama!

Say, wouldn't you think that Papa would have come through at this point in the story, because after all Teddy had risked all for him? He didn't! So just as soon as Teddy comfortably could she did the—Exit Teddy act, and you know the rest of the story.

And, now when she's beginning to make a name for herself—the citizens of Altoona have drawn up a petition asking that her name be crossed off the rostrum because she's a blot on the town.

Who ever said, "The Woman Didn't Give All and All and All?" Teddy finally married Dick to make an honest man of him and took him to Paris on a honeymoon. And what does friend husband do in acknowledgment of all this kindness, but carry on an affair with—but really Teddy does tell the story much better than we can.

If after reading her story you don't write a letter to Altoona advising them to set up a monument in the town square to her memory we shall be obliged to feel that your choicest bootlegger is serving a term in jail.

Winona Mavis, a very particular friend of Dion O'Day's, was all set for marrying a successful author when she fell in love with Joe Volney, a hack artist. Dion certainly gets a kick out of Winona's tangle and believe me you will too. In the July issue of **PEP STORIES** you'll understand why Winona shrieked **OH, DAMN! DAMN! DAMN!**

We know it's criminal to be so unsympathetic 'cause you can never tell when you'll wake up and find yourself in the same straits. But Dion is incorrigible and you simply must laugh with 'im.

Myrtle in a scarlet kimono was dozing upon the luxurious divan. She looked what she was—a woman who waits.



WHEN his excitement over the telegram had somewhat abated, it occurred to Jason Poynter that he had a very distasteful—almost sacrilegious—task to perform before Angela arrived. Angela—beautiful and gentle, with shining eyes and heavenly voice, speeding to him from Boston where he had met her—heard her sing, three weeks ago. No, a thousand years ago. She would arrive in Bluefield at ten that night the telegram said. He would meet her at the station with a clean slate. He had a little better than an hour to wipe out that old score with Myrtle Clausen.

He rose from his easy chair before

the fire, drew on his heavy topcoat and gloves and took up his hat. Shorter than the men that women ordinarily picture as great lovers, Jason Poynter's particular characteristics were his voice and his mesmeric eyes; deep brown eyes to enslave women and a fascinating spell-working voice. For a moment he stood looking over the room, his eyes clouding and his heart thumping violently in anticipation of future raptures. Tonight she would be moving gracefully about the apartment. First before the fire, warming her pretty white hands. Later, at the piano, her hair soft and golden as honey in the candlelight, her face uplifted like Saint Cecilia. Then, she would unpack—the east bedroom would be hers. But he must hurry to Myrtle now.

Don Juan Passes

By Daisy Griffin Turner

*Does a man who has
played flippantly at love
find it easy to discard
the high-lights of his
past when the one and
only comes along?*



As he rode through the driving sleet and sharp wind of a raw December night, Jason thought that Angela was like a cascade, pure and powerful—Myrtle Clausen and those other women who had entangled his past, stagnant pools. Angela was the particular treasure he had long since despaired of finding. That was why, for years, he had been drawing upon the world's manifold treasures in general, only to discover that the most dazzling of them was but an iridescent bubble. He looked forward now to a bond stronger than the bond of the senses. His uncharted freedom was no longer a high adventure. This union with Angela would be as unlike those others as day is unlike

night. After each new conquest there had always been the feeling that something was lacking. He had acquired the flawless technique of the artist—but without soul or inspiration. Hard and reckless, he had scorned all laws of God and man. But with Angela there would be no end. . .

Poynter stopped the car in front of Myrtle Clausen's apartment, darted through the sleet to its shelter, and stood, shivering, in the entrance. Thoughtfully, but with a feeling of perfect assurance, he climbed the single flight of stairs and mechanically fitted his key into the lock. The door swung back and Jason gasped for breath. The wave of hot air, heavy with a sickeningly sweet perfume, seemed stifling him.

He crossed the threshold and in the dim flicker of light that glowed from an open fire, discovered Myrtle dozing upon the luxurious divan. In a scarlet kimono, her slender hands clasped back of her sleek black head, she looked what she was—a woman who waits. At sight of him, her eyes brightened and her bosom swelled.

"I recognized your step," she said happily, "though heaven knows why. It's been three weeks since I heard it. Take off your things—kiss me first—" her arms lifted invitingly, but otherwise

she did not alter her position on the divan.

"I can't stay," he said, warming his back at the fireplace and busily lighting a cigarette.

"What's the hurry? I heard about the trip to Boston and about the sweet singer—have you come to tell me? Is it off with the old and on with the new, my handsome Jason?" Myrtle Clausen asked.

"Yes," Jason admitted suavely, "it's the real thing for the first time in my life. But you and I aren't going to quarrel—I couldn't quarrel with anybody tonight." He turned and his eyes rested upon a small statuette, a genuine antique, on the mantel.

"Look, Myrtle," he said with sudden inspiration, "here's the first woman I ever bought. You admire her. She's yours for keeps."

Myrtle's eyes lifted to the mutilated Venus that she had brought from Poynter's apartment to hers several months ago.

"You're giving her to me—the last woman?" she asked, her waxen lids lowering to hide a sudden glint of steel in her eyes as she laughed ironically.

"You're clever, Myrtle," Jason Poynter said silkily, and lightly flung his cigarette into the fire. To him Myrtle was merely an unusually bright thread in the colorful skein of his past.

"It isn't difficult to read the handwriting on the wall when a man begins like this," Myrtle Clausen rose in her scarlet dishabille, and came toward Poynter, sensuously graceful. With a swift passionate gesture, she clung to him.

"You and I have been too much to each other to part like this," she said, half pleadingly.

"You remember our agreement—that when one of us tired—" he reminded her.

"Jason—this other woman—I've heard she's—good . . . Can't you be content with me, already fallen? Be-

sides, an inexperienced woman will bore you—all right as a nun, but as a mistress—you'll find her an iceberg, a snow mountain. . ."

"I'll melt her," he smiled, and confidently lit another cigarette.

She came close to him. "Jason, let's you and I try living like other people—married—babies."

Jason Poynter gave a little involuntary shudder. This woman, the mother of his children. . .

"Don't be absurd, Myrtle," he said with an air of finality.

"I'll go to this sweet young thing and warn her—" she threatened. "I was like that myself once—if only somebody had told me—"

"Oh, no, Myrtle," he shrugged, "it isn't done."

"You think you can go on forever sowing your wild oats and reaping roses—I'll show you—"

"I'm reasonable, Myrtle. Look," he drew out a roll of bills and peeled them one by one on to the table before him. "Twenty of those," he said, indicating the pile of bank notes. "Twenty hundred dollar bills for your trip to Paris. . ."

"Pay," she sneered. "You'll get yours in the end."

"Living with her will redeem my past," Jason Poynter said half to himself. "Goodbye, old girl. You'll be getting married yourself one of these days," he continued as he opened the door.

She took a quick step toward him.

"Yes," she said, "all I'll have to do will be to pose as the lily white maid. If I'd done that in the beginning, perhaps your grand passion would have been for me—"

But Jason had closed the door behind him, and outside rain, mingled with sleet and snow was stinging his face as he again climbed into his car. The storm increased and he was forced to drive slowly. He hoped Angela was comfortable.

The train was at the station when he got there and people were getting off. He didn't see her. Suppose she hadn't come. His heart skipped a miserable beat. Oh yes, there she was, fair, tall and slender and indescribably beautiful, an ingratiating conductor at her elbow. Jason brushed the crowd aside and took her bag.

To the blonde lace and cameo at her throat, Angela was the quaint type. Through the blur of his emotions, Jason saw her as a creature divine, a woman fed and strengthened by the accumulated wisdom of the race, having direct access to a supreme source. She held out her hands happily, laughing a laugh that showed all her white teeth. The sweetness of her mouth—the way her eyes clung to his as he tried to tell her how glad he was that she had come. . .

In the car he kissed her, restraining himself reverently. It was his second kiss. He had kissed her once the day they were married, a week ago.

Of course, no one knew they were married. Tomorrow they would surprise Jason's friends with the announcement. Jason was a little ashamed of that marriage. But Angela had understood; had wished it as much as he. The violence of the storm made conversation in the car impossible, so Jason thought of their first meeting. He had been in Boston on business; had gone to this recital and heard Angela sing, "If a Suffering Creature is Divine." Sitting rather close to the stage he had been given ample opportunity to study her, but even now he could not explain the spell she had cast over him that night. . . It was love, and so compelling had that love been that he had remained in Boston two weeks and was with Angela constantly during that time. She had felt it too—had met him half way. She had heard of him, knew he was the wealthy, much-traveled Jason Poynter of Bluefield. He had been so completely swept from his feet,

so enraptured with her that he could not bear the thought of leaving her. Jealously, he feared that if he did so some other man might find her and take her from him. He was miserable, for it was imperative that he return to Bluefield. He went to her and confessed his true feelings, begging her to marry him.

"Father and mother would die if I didn't finish my course," she had said, "but just to show you I do love you, we'll be married and keep it secret—it's only one more week till I graduate."

And he had taken her up on that. Half an hour after the ceremony she was back in the practice hall and he was on his way to Bluefield to wait that endless week, thrilled each time he recalled the sweetness of her kiss.

Jason's man had a big fire burning in the living room of the apartment when they went up. With a grandiloquent gesture, Jason Poynter paused and said, "Angela, my wife, this is one of your homes—the other is in my heart—" For one rapturous moment they embraced and he crushed his lips to hers. No, he had never before known the fullness of love. In his wildest imaginings he had not experienced such bliss as this that flowed through him so maddeningly when his lips touched hers.

Like two children they unpacked her things. Then it was that he noticed that she was in some subtle manner changed from the Angela he had married. Her eyes—a faint suggestion of heaviness. She was tired. He made her sit down while he hung up her things, prim little Priscilla dresses and intimate silken garments that he handled awkwardly.

Before he had finished, the Japanese man-servant came to say that Madam's bath was ready. Angela rose with alacrity, and to Poynter this was further evidence of her innate purity. He followed her to the door for another

kiss, and was turning again to the business of unpacking when the doorbell rang, loud, insistent.

Jason himself admitted the boy in dripping slicker and cap.

"Special delivery for Miss Angela McAllister," the messenger announced. "Does she live here?" he demanded, producing the letter and the slip for signature.

Jason took the letter and signed for it.

The boy slammed the door and Jason's eyes lifted from the disagreeable puddle of water on the rug to rest upon the letter for his wife. The Boston address was crossed out and the forwarding address written in pencil. He was in the act of taking it to her when his attention riveted upon something in the upper left-hand corner. Not a name, the writer was too discreet for that, but an address, whose familiarity startled him. He paused to study it—"Grove Crest"—Steve Welsh's hunting lodge. Steve the notorious "man about town," Steve who had been Jason's "buddy" at home and in France till rivalry over a French woman had in a day made bitter enemies of them. And since that time Steve had taken occasion to square that old account. Doubtless this letter to Angela was one of his devilish tricks to get even, perhaps a death blow to their happiness—his happiness and Angela's. Steve Welsh could tell things that Angela with her finer sensibilities might not be able to forgive. At any rate, if she knew, she would suffer. If only Steve hadn't seen them together so often in Boston those two weeks. . .

Ordinarily it would not have occurred to Jason to open Angela's or anybody else's mail, but he couldn't risk this, not on his bridal night. Damn Steve Welsh—that French woman hadn't been worth fighting over.

With sudden determination, Jason tore open the letter and glanced curiously at the salutation. He passed his

hand across his eyes and read it again. "*From Angela's first lover, greetings!*"

"*First lover!*" Steve Welsh had a passion for satire, and "*first*" was underscored.

In a sort of blind fury, Jason read on, turning pale and beginning to tremble as his quick eye ran down the page and the deadly implication of the letter seared itself into his soul. There was no mistaking, no room for misunderstanding or doubt. . .

Jason slumped into a chair just behind him. The last vestige of color drained from his cheeks, leaving them ashen, and an expression of unutterable agony masked his features. He thrust his fingers under his collar, there was a lump in his throat, choking him. His world had crashed about him and to shut out the horror of its ruins he buried his head in his hands. Once too often he had trifled with sacred things.

It was the splashing in the bathroom that brought him back to reality. Should he show the letter to Angela, tell her that he knew? When she came to him fresh and expectant from the bath, should he confront her with the positive proof contained on this white sheet that she had once been Steve Welsh's mistress? Angela. . . the way her eyes had clung to his. . . no, a thousand times no. To do that would kill something else, it would be even more intolerable than his present ache.

From where he sat he tossed the letter across the room and into the flames before which she had warmed her pretty white hands. As he watched the paper curl to feathery ashes, he tried to picture her there before the fire, but the dream in his eyes was quite dead now. He sat, like an old man, listening to the patter of rain driven against the windows by gusts of cold wind.

"I had it coming to me. . . this is my punishment. This," he told himself with a strained sardonic smile, "is what I laid up for a rainy day. . ."



Let's Park in the Car

By Eugene Grier



IT was the night of the Junior Prom at Carnley College. The large gymnasium had been lavishly decorated for the most important social event of the session. Yards upon yards of pastel-colored bunting had been draped from the ceilings and walls with a studied, extravagant abandon. A mechanical lighting system, installed by the elec-

trical students, caused the lights to fade into dull, glowing bits of green and amber, then slowly to flash up again, filling the hall with brilliance.

Already the dance was an unqualified success. Out on the floor were a hundred girls and almost as many Carnley men. The wallflowers, middle-aged and older women, towing their husbands, studied the scene carefully. Here they were to obtain enough material for gossip to last the Thursday Sewing Club until a new campus scandal should develop.

"Did you see that Middleton girl?" Mrs. Richardson inquired of Mrs. Castling. "Her dress is positively indecent. Imagine anyone wearing such a short skirt, and her stockings rolled, too. I thought that fad had been forgotten. And did you notice that girl in the green velvet? She looks as if she'd been drinking. There she is, dancing with that Mr. Darby."

The girl in the green velvet was blissfully ignorant of the interest she had created, and had she known, it would have bothered her pretty head but little. For Patricia Byrne was possessed of an enviable disposition which permitted her to worry not the least over the impressions she made upon professors' wives.

Patricia was supremely joyous tonight. It was her first Carnley dance, and she was dancing with Steve Darby, and the orchestra was playing "My Sweetheart."

"Pat," said Steve, "I'm going to dance with you every time they play that song tonight."

"Is that a promise?" queried Patricia, her piquant cameo face lifted to Steve and her eyes dancing with sheer delight.

"Honor bright, come what may," promised Steve.

Patricia Byrne was a girl whom one singled out in any gathering. She was small and "cuddly looking," as one of her admirers had once said. Her face, framed in a bewitching bob of raven-black curls, was a study in pink-and-white loveliness. Her large brown eyes, with their intriguing glimmer, captured and held the attention. Tonight she wore the green velvet gown, carefully selected for this occasion. Cut daringly low, it revealed an extravagant V of creamy smooth flesh, which melted into the shadowy suggestion of her exquisitely rounded young breasts which were perfectly moulded by the close-fitting bodice. The skirt, falling away in loose folds, ended in long points which covered her dimpled knees but revealed glimpses of them as she danced. The

velvet, clinging here and there, suggested the softly-rippling curves of her petite figure. Her slim legs, encased in the sheerest of black chiffon hose, were perfectly rounded from knees to daintily-chiseled ankles which flashed above her ridiculously tiny french-heeled pumps.

As Mrs. Richardson had surmised, Patricia had been drinking tonight. But she had had only three or four tiny sips of Steve's excellent gin. Patricia was, however, no hardened drinker, and these surreptitious visits to the flask had given her a delightful feeling of exhilaration.

She and Steve glided along to the lazy rhythm of a waltz. Holding her close to him, Steve slowly and deftly piloted her towards the door. As the lights faded into mellowness he bent over slightly and his lips barely grazed the velvet softness of her cheek.

"Let's go for a walk, Pat," he suggested.

Patricia agreed instantly and they slipped, unnoticed, out a side door. The night was completely dark. Heavy clouds obscured every star as the pair, arm in arm, made their way to Steve's car which had been discreetly parked in a remote spot. A crisp autumn breeze whipped the color into Patricia's cheeks as they covered the short distance to Steve's sedan. Arriving at the parking spot, they clambered into the back seat and Steve produced his flask, now almost empty.

"Oh, goody! Just one more wee little one," Patricia begged.

The gin exhausted, Steve adroitly placed a cigarette between her lips as he took one for himself. They smoked in silence for a moment, settling down in the soft cushions.

"Isn't it a glorious night?" ventured Patricia.

"Splendid," returned Steve.

Silence again for a few moments, and they both tossed their cigarettes away.

"Pat, you know I'm crazy about you . . ." Steve began.

"Steve, you're a dear, but let's don't talk now," said Patricia. "It's so heavenly just to sit here and listen to the music up at the gym and just be near each other."

Steve's arm, heretofore wedged in between them, somehow extricated itself and boldly but gently encircled her waist. Her own tapered ivory arm, warm and soft, crept over his shoulder and about his neck. Steve leaned towards her, and in the darkness his lips found hers for an instant, then almost savagely he drew her to him, pressed her gently throbbing bosom to his broad chest, and sought her lips again. Together they were lifted off the commonplace earth and transported into a rose-tinted fairyland of sheer delight as his lips crushed her small, warm, inviting mouth.

For minutes they remained, locked in each other's embrace when Pat managed to free herself sufficiently to say, "God, Steve, how I love you. Take me, hold me, don't ever let me go!"

Steve's answer was to crush her still closer and to rain fierce, devouring kisses upon her slightly-parted lips. "Never, sweetheart," he finally managed to say.

They continued, utterly oblivious to everything about them. She had half climbed, had been half lifted upon Steve's knee, resting her feet upon the door of the car, her arms tightly entwined about his neck while he pressed her closer to him. She could feel his heart beats against her soft bosom, and her breath came in short gasps. She knew that Steve was almost crushing her, and that her wisp of skirt had fallen away from her knees, revealing the neat roll of her hose above her knees and displaying a considerable expanse of frankly uncovered soft white flesh, but Patricia cared not for these things. She was gloriously happy in the arms of her lover and nothing else mattered.

Suddenly from the gym windows there came to their ears the opening strains of a familiar air. The orchestra was playing "My Sweetheart." Instantly Patricia regained her composure.

"That's our dance, Steve, dear," she said.

Slowly they disentangled themselves. Patricia shook out the folds of her truant skirt and Steve rearranged his necktie as they stepped out of the car and made their way back to the gym, and the crowd, and respectability.



SLUMMING!

DUMB—I hear you're a jolly good swimmer, Miss Brown.

BEAUTIFUL—Sorry, but I've never been near the water, Mr. Smith.

DUMB—That's funny. Mr. Jones told me you knew all the dives.

—Burr.

The Bliss of Ignorance

By Robert M. Ducote

Would you rather have your friends, who always seem to know everything, tell you the truth or do you prefer to be left in your fool's paradise?



IN a cool, secluded corner of the Antoine two men sat, lingering over coffee and cigars after their luncheon. Neither seemed to be in any particular hurry to return to his work, one to his movie lot and the consideration of weighty problems of filmdom and the other to busy himself with the last deft touches on a portrait of a lady who was as homely as she was rich. It was Jules Bernard, the suave, slightly-grizzled, world-famed movie director with the blasé, stoical features who first broke the long silence.

"Have you realized that Spring has come again, Billy?" he asked, his gaze shifting to the window and becoming fixed on the tender green foliage of the trees lining the street. His keen, greenish-gray eyes softened, something they very rarely did.

Billy Canters, sleek, black-haired, with the fires of youth—genius, perhaps—flickering in the depths of his cloudy-blue eyes, also looked out of the window. But it was not the delicate green of the foliage he saw; his gaze was fastened on the shimmering green of a girl's dress, a pretty girl whose face and figure and tripping footsteps were

the very essence of youth and vitality. What a striking resemblance . . . In a moment his thoughts had winged backward to another Spring, not so very distant, one that he believed he would never forget.

"Yes," he replied absently, "it's here again with all its mad impulses, its heart throbs and—its regrets."

"That's rather cynical, Billy, coming from you," Jules Bernard commented, studying the younger man intently. There were times when he thought his artist friend was becoming unduly morose. He hazarded a tentative question.

"A little affair of the heart, perhaps?"

For some time Billy continued to gaze down upon the street, to all appearances unaware of his companion's query, but finally he roused himself and flicked the ashes from his cigar with a gesture bordering on the impatient. Then, elbows on the table, he faced his old friend.

"Damn it all," he said, "I've never unloaded this to a living soul, and maybe that's why it's clung to me so closely. I'm going to confide in you, you wise old sphinx. It might help.

"Of course, there's a girl, the kind of girl that makes you think of a little white dove. At any rate, that's what I thought of her when I first saw her.



"I saw her one morning just at dawn. She had just finished bathing in a clear, rippling stream and was stepping out of the water."

Later—but I'll tell you about that part at the proper time."

He smoked with nervous haste for a moment or two.

"It happened one Spring two years ago," he resumed presently. "I had become possessed of a sudden whim to paint landscapes and had gone back to nature. I secured a shack some fifty miles from here in the foothills.

"I first saw her one morning just at dawn. It would have cracked that poker face of yours all to pieces, old friend, if you had seen the picture she made. She had just finished bathing in a clear, rippling stream and was stepping out of the water, the sort of one-piece dress she was putting on making the beauty of her figure more entrancing than total nudity. The background of green trees couldn't have been improved. She was—well, she was wonderful, indescribable, and right

then and there I decided I would never be satisfied until I had painted her."

He paused to clear his throat, but Jules Bernard smoked placidly on and made no comment. To any one who knew him intimately, though, the slight drooping of his eyelids would have proclaimed the fact that he was experiencing a marked degree of enjoyment.

"Well," Billy proceeded finally, "as I said, I was simply mad to make a picture of her, to transfer that spun-gold hair, those pansy eyes, lips that—damn it, what's the use! You've got to see the beauty of a woman like that to appreciate it."

The grizzled head across the table nodded in sage acquiescence. Perhaps one of the reasons Jules Bernard was so universally liked was because he was such a good listener.

"I waited until she had finished dressing before making my presence

known," Billy went on when he realized that his companion had no comment to offer. "She was the picture of innocence, I tell you—big soft eyes and timid as a gazelle. Despite this I finally gained her confidence and with it her consent to pose for me, the last only when she realized that I regarded it merely as a business matter. I took care to make the pay attractive, you may be sure. We resolved to keep our little agreement a secret from her family, for she told me her father was rather straight-laced and stern. It was very probable that he wouldn't hear of it, should he know. She could easily slip away from home, she said, and pose for me at the shack.

"Next morning she appeared as agreed, but when it came to arrange the pose, I had some moments of doubt as to whether or not she would stick to her bargain. Finally, though, I succeeded in arranging her in a semi-nude pose, just the exquisite shoulders showing, you know. I soon sensed that she had no false modesty, no mock embarrassment. She was as natural and unspoiled as a child."

Billy paused and a waiter hovering nearby took advantage of his silence to touch a match to his cold cigar.

"Days went by," the narrator continued, his handsome features glowingly earnest, "and my being was thoroughly swayed by two emotions. One was the realization that I was painting the masterpiece of my career; the other was that the beauty, the sweet dove-like innocence of my model was stirring my heart to the core. I was, in fact, madly in love with her. Never was a man as sorely tempted as I was. We spent hours alone together. I had every opportunity to crush her hungrily to my heart. But I really loved her. That was her protection."

"I understand, Billy," Jules Bernard said quietly, and his stolid features crinkled into a faint, tender smile. His eyes softened with a dreamy light.

Very rarely indeed could such an expression be seen on his face.

"Then—one day, she weepingly confessed what I had already begun to suspect," Billy went on, a trifle huskily. "She was to become a mother. And, ye gods, the prospective father was a dull, overgrown lout who acted as man of all work on her father's farm!

"I writhed! I squirmed! You can well imagine that. My love and my pride had been severely wounded. I became cynical where women were concerned, especially beautiful women of the sweet, innocent, baby-faced type. In the end, however, I gave her money with which to come here to the city, for she was fearful of her father's rage should he discover her plight."

Pale, his features tense and drawn, Billy gazed out of the window unseeing, his twitching fingers breaking a match into bits.

"Well? And then?" Jules Bernard prompted softly.

"That's all. I've never seen her since," Billy said tonelessly.

There was silence for a space. Then the director chuckled as he regarded the man opposite him with indulgent amusement.

"You moon-struck calf, do you mean to tell me you're still regretting the might-have-been? Just because things are budding and getting green you must dream of a baby-faced wench? Whoever said you artist chaps were sentimental idealists was right!"

"But—you've never seen her," Billy remonstrated.

"Applesauce!" Jules Bernard jibed, and continued chuckling.

At that moment a beautiful woman, a dazzling beautiful woman, appeared at the entrance of the dining-room. She had the sweet dove-like face of a Madonna. Her gentian eyes wandered about until she spied Jules Bernard and Billy. Without hesitation she advanced toward them. Billy's back was turned to her, but the other man caught sight

of her a few moments before she reached them.

"I've a little surprise for you, Billy," he said quickly. "I want you to meet some one."

When the woman reached their table, Jules Bernard was already courteously on his feet. Her slim white hand slid into his.

"This is Billy Canters, dear. My wife, Billy. She is to star in my next picture," the director said, glowing with pride. "The sweetest, purest little girl in the world. We stole a march on everybody and were married yesterday."

Billy could hardly credit the evidence of his own eyes as he hastily arose and faced his friend's wife. A name gushed to his lips, but he choked it back. In a

flash he had reached a momentous decision. Sometimes 'tis folly to be wise, he thought. His friend's happiness was at stake. A word from him could transform the delight beaming on his usually impassive features into the bitter hell of disillusionment. Even a fool's paradise is a paradise—to the fool!

"Delighted, I assure you," he said evenly. "And congratulations and best wishes. I thought at first I had met your wife somewhere, but I'm sure I was mistaken now."

And on the sweet, innocent, white-dove features of the girl who had once posed for Billy in the isolation of his woodland shack there spread an expression of ineffable relief and gratitude.



First lady of the harem—"Oh, how I hate him—hate him—hate him!"

Second lady of the harem—"And how long has this romance been going on?"

From Alpha to Omega



stands for Alice Astoria Anne
whose *Papa*, they say, was a very rich man;
He bought her fine jewels and Paquins of lace,
For papa liked beauty besides of the face.



is for Bye-bye that Alice would say
When papa went walking down Tiffany's way;
And if he came home with perhaps a few pearls,
Dear Alice would smile and just toss her blonde curls.



means to Cuddle, and Alice knew how,
Her boy friend proclaimed little Alice a wow.
Whenever she started to pet or to neck
She found friendly ardor not easy to check.



stands for Dwelling where diggers reside,
A place in New York on the upper West Side;
And Alice would often, for sad was her life,
Just give the big doorman a gift for his wife.



is for Edward, the doorman's first name,
A man of fine parts and of A. E. F. fame.
His beauty of line had the strangest effect
When Alice passed by, as he stood there erect.



stands for Friendly, and Alice was that—
She'd smile a sweet smile, when he touched his blue
hat.
One morning while leaving, the ice made her slip,
And Edward who helped her heard, "he's off on a
trip."



's for the Gladness she'd had in her voice,
When safe in her motor, a shining Rolls Royce.
With papa away little Alice was sad
And Edward's protection was all that she had,



for Home-coming when dinner time came;
Poor Alice by now seemed quite terribly lame.
Why, Edward, her friend, showed the greatest alarm,
As Alice limped in on his A. E. F. arm!



's for Ideas that come now and then
To sweet little maids and to strong soldier men.
Ah, think of poor Alice alone in that place,
And think of her friend with Adonis's face!



stands for Juice of the orange we drink,
(I don't care a bit what your worldly minds think!)
"It's there in the kitchen," said Alice, deep stirred,
And soon shaking ice was the only sound heard.



stands for Kick that may sometimes be found
In juices of fruits and things lying around;
And Alice, slow sipping that nice cooling drink,
Forgot her lame ankle as quick as a wink.



stands for Luck, and a lot of things like,
Sweet Friendship is something we don't always strike,
And Alice's ripened for Edward so fast
That soon they were cosy and time quickly passed.



is for Morning with clock striking twice,
Said Alice to Edward "my friend it's been nice!
How quickly time's flown, but I must write a note,
For likely your wife needs some furs for a coat."



stands for Nancie, his sweet pretty wife,
Who led a domestic, though not a sad life;
And she had her playmates as Edward had his.
What happened outside, well, was nobody's bizz.



is for Overhead, costing a lot,
And things often seem what they sometimes are not,
Both Nancie and Edward worked hard and worked well
A very delighted and rich clientele.



's for the Parties that rich people gave
Where Nancie so pretty knew how to behave,
Technique is the thing that she never forgot;
Then sometimes her friends made her gifts and, why not?



is for Questions that often arise
To furrow men's brows and wrinkle their eyes.
Now Alice's papa could solve them with ease,
That's why he was paid many very large fees.



is for Restaurants, painted with gilt,
The price of whose food makes a bank account wilt,
The papa of Alice met Nancie at one,
And liked her right off, for they had lots of fun.



stands for Something that Nancie had said
About her regrets for her once having wed,
So papa felt sorry as any man would,
And told her a sea trip would do her much good.



is for Thursday when papa left town,
The day you remember dear Alice fell down.
He went off to Boston on matters of law;
How strange that 'twas Nancie the first one he saw!



stands for Uttered surprises and such,
However they didn't delay very much.
On meeting for dinner they both were agreed—
A very nice evening was had, yes, indeed!



's for the Violet perfume so sweet
On Alice's letter awaiting to greet
Sweet Nancie returning refreshed and all that,
And wearing a very expensive new hat.



stands for What Alice had penned—
"How wonderful Edward has been as my friend!
I suffered, he helped me so tender and kind,
Enclosed please find check, and I hope you won't
mind."



stands for something unknown till it's proved,
And Nancie of course couldn't help feeling moved,
With heart all a-glow and a cherubic smile
She answered the note in her own naive style.

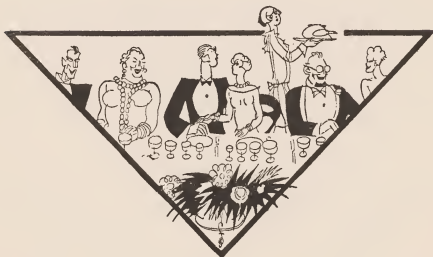


's for the Yes, as our Nancie agreed
That Edward was gentle and tender indeed,
And speaking of kindness, her letter then ran—
"Thanks much for the check, dearie, so's your old
man."



is Zat's Zat, as our Alphabet ends,
The moral is clear so please heed it, my friends.
A pot may be black or be shiny and new,
The color is simply a question of view.

By Pere Jars



Pink Pajamas

By C. S. Montanye

*How long and how often can a loose-footed male
stray from the straight and narrow without his
wife discovering there's something rotten in
Denmark?*



EXTER ANSON

was a clever as well as a lucky dog. A thousand times during the first year of his marriage he told himself as much.

Other men, twice his age and with three times his brains, struggled along, day in and day out, in the same weary, monotonous rut. Whereas, he, by merely marrying Judy and Judy's dowry, had made himself secure for life.

Dexter even chuckled when he thought of how it had all come about. A seashore hotel porch . . . the white fire of the moon . . . and the red fire of hot passionate lips . . . Her figure melting against his own . . . her eyes swooning into his and then . . . Well, he had compromised her and made it so she had to marry him to save the rags and tatters of her reputation, her social standing.

And so they were married and the year had sped very pleasantly along so far as Dexter was concerned. He liked the novelty of a motor and a French chauffeur. Of silken dressing robes, finely tailored clothing, a valet and the sensuous luxury of dimly lighted rooms, sullen rugs, and deep, comfortable furniture.

Yet when the first year concluded Dexter found himself oddly restless, nervous and moody. This reason, he

traced to the sameness of Judy. By God! Why did women—particularly married women—let themselves go? There was Judy for instance, unchanging, ardent at set intervals but frightfully tiresome. He wondered if she imagined he might find the same first thrills in her . . . the same first perfumed delight . . . the same ecstasy that made a poem of his fervent emotions. Often he wished he could find the courage to tell her how deathly sick of her clinging lips, her embraces, he had become.

But he didn't dare. It was her bounty he existed upon. She loved him but love had the unhappy faculty of dying. And he could not relinquish those things he had become so used to—the silken dressing robes, the town car and the deft-handed valet.

Early in March, however, Dexter's nervous unrest reached a climax. A sort of dullness had settled down upon him. He wanted to get beastly drunk, or arrested, or run over. He wanted to be indiscreet. Mostly he wanted a feminine adventure to vary the boredom holding him in sluggish leash. So Dexter, toward the end of the month, set warily out to find one.

It was not difficult in the city of Tears and Taxis. A night club, a bloom in the exotic desert of light-smitten Broadway. A drink and the heavy invitation of languorous eyes. A half hour after

his entry Dexter faced the girl across the table.

Her name was Ava and she was beautiful as any dream. She had gleaming silken knees, a quaint if somewhat set smile, bare powdered shoulders and hair that was like a copper flame. She was a slender doll in cloth of gold; enamelled artfully; with gold in two slipper points at her hem's edge and legs that were round and fascinating. He knew, naturally, exactly what she was but he did not care.

Sufficient that she was a momentary adventure—a rather heady antidote to the wearisome Judy—and he liked her small, insolent rose mouth that dropped thorns as well as blossoms upon him. Words of honey had long since palled. This Ava had a temper. He enjoyed it immensely.

The "affair" though was slightly disappointing. Ava was as careful of a denouement as Dexter was careful no hint of his philandering should reach Judy's ears. A dozen times he tried desperately to arouse the girl with the rose mouth and the gleaming knees. He took her in his arms, he crushed her savagely and completely to him, he told her all manner of things but he had to be content with her lips alone . . . with the soft, enticing feel of her, the subtle drift of her hair and body, a maddening fragrance.

Two weeks after the meeting in the blatant night club, Judy looked at Dexter across the matutinal coffee-cups. And he looked with a frown at the letter she held in one white hand.

"Dex, dear, mother is ill. So ill that it is necessary for me to go directly to Sundial. I have told Marie to pack. I will take a train at noon."

Dexter felt something catch in his throat.

"How long," he inquired, "do you contemplate being away?"

She considered.

"A week at least. Dex, darling, will you miss me? Will you think of me

and write me? Our first separation since we've been married! Oh, honey—"

He kissed her thoughtfully and tried hard to show concern. But it was hard with every pulse clamoring, with his mind swarming with errant fancies and ideas.

"Miss you—of course. Every hour of the day and," he added significantly, "the night."

The first thing Dexter did, once he had put Judy on the train, was to give his valet a week's vacation. Then, on the night before Judy's return from the Berkshires, he at last won Ava's consent to drop in at the apartment. It was no small victory either. Every art of persuasion had to be brought into play . . . pleading . . . humiliation and promises. But she was really coming and nothing else was of any concern.

Ava at last then!

She faced him through the dimness of the tranquil room, an amber witch created solely for love and the fulfillment of it. From her indolent eyes to her slipper heels she was finished with a rare delicacy, with incredible loveliness, seemingly of fairy stuff that might vanish at his touch.

But she didn't. She was real, alive and vibrantly warm in the arms he put about her. She gave him back his kiss before they touched the rims of their gallon glasses together and she laughed softly at him through the lamplight.

"You're all warm and excited and everything," she jested. "What's the matter anyway?"

Dexter folded back her fingers, one by one.

"Nothing," he breathed. "Not a blessed thing. You're here and that is all that matters, Ava—"

It was too. Toward noon the next day, Dexter, alone and meditative, smoked a cigarette in the lounge. It was not guilt that had set itself upon him. He tried to check back and make sure there was not one solitary clue

Judy might pounce upon to link tomorrow with last night.

Had he covered his tracks thoroughly? Was there a footprint in the pile of the sullen rugs, a smear of creamy powder, a silk-tipped cigarette end or a sticky wine glass to betray him? Until the evening came and it was train time Dexter checked back and made certain.

Judy was glad to see him. She clung and clung and caressed him, blissfully unaware of the passengers in the vast railroad terminal. She snuggled to him in the tonneau of the town car that took them uptown. And later—very much later—she shook out the tangles of her brown hair and smiled at him through the snare of her lashes just as she had smiled that poignant night when the moon was a silver rug on the murmuring ocean.

"Dex, dear, Dex." The words crooned themselves into a little song of contentment. "Aren't you coming—"

Dexter shook himself impatiently. The last vestige of apprehension had disappeared. There was nothing to fear. Her bounty was still his own to live upon and enjoy.

"And you stayed here all alone last night?" he heard her saying. "Poor boy—all alone—with his Judy miles and miles away—"

Dexter spoke without turning.

"All alone and missing you like the very devil, baby. How about the lamp? Ready to have it turned out?"

"Yes, but—"

He heard, first, the rustle of the pillows on the bed. Then a smothered exclamation, a tense, strangled cry. He wheeled around, something keen and cold surging through him. Judy, her fetching nightie drooping from one shoulder strap, sat upright but he didn't notice her charming disarray, the ivory gleam of her skin or the light glistening on it.

Dexter saw only that she had turned a



"Alone, you said? . . . So that's the sort you are!" shrieked Judy clutching a pair of slinky, perfumed, transparent pink pajamas.

pillow and from under it had found and drawn something which she held toward him. In her eyes, her face, the strained attitude of her he knew at that moment he had gambled and—lost!

"Alone, you said? . . . So that is the sort you are! . . ."

The contempt in her icy tones lost themselves upon him as Dexter blinked and stared harder. What a fool, what

a blind fool, he had been! No use to stammer lies . . . explanations . . . he had brought it upon himself . . . the medicine was his to take!

He looked once more at the slinky, perfumed, transparent pink pajamas Judy clutched to her before he moved his stricken gaze to the window . . . the cold, empty streets outside . . . and the world he knew must await him there.



PEP'S Been Noticing That—

I*T is no good trying to meet a check, or a woman, unless you are in funds.*

A person who tells you the faults of others will tell others of yours.

The man who has a wife too many is not necessarily a bigamist. Some people are born good; others have to make good.

Brides are always given away; bridegrooms are nearly always sold.

The world is moving very fast these days, but not so fast as some of the girls that live in it.

All things come to those who wait. But you won't have to wait so long if you tip profusely.

Some people are so little amusing that they could not entertain a doubt.

When a man acts like a live wire something is sure to happen. He may shock someone.

Nothing is more ridiculous than an old man in love.

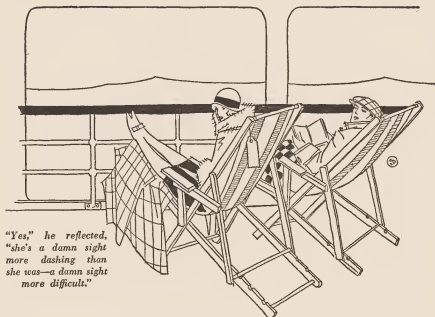
It is a worthless hen that lays eggs for the neighbors.

Not years but worries make men old.

No river is so deep as to have no bottom.

A child often gets kisses that are meant for its mother.

Good for Goose and Gander



"Yes," he reflected, "she's a damn sight more dashing than she was—a damn sight more difficult."

By Arnold Gingrich

What happens when a gay young American wife doesn't recover from the dazzling life of Paris as quickly and circumspectly as friend husband thinks she should?



YOU know, Dine, I think our time in Paris got us both into the habit of doing too much of what the Parisians do."

They were sitting in the verandah cafe of the *S. S. D'Orsay*, from which there was, and had been for the past five days, nothing but Atlantic to look at. Bernadine Wethered, blonde, beautiful and bored, was intent upon the business of stubbing her cigarette in the ash tray on the little wicker table at which they sat. But the

sentence which her husband had just drawled, seemed to give her something more interesting to think about.

"Oh, so it got *us both*, did it? Well, Tommy boy, if I admit—and of course I do—that I danced once or a few times too often last night with that adorable young Russian, still, darling, that hardly brings me down to the level *you've* maintained so consistently for the past few months! What *you've* done, and when, and where, I'd like to remember for a long time—to think of whenever I'm afraid of what my conscience will say if I frisk about a bit."

"There, that's just the attitude I'm

referring to. Just because we let out a notch or two in our moral belts, so to speak, in order to enjoy Paris more appropriately, is no reason why we should neglect to take those notches back in on our return to—proper society. The things we grew accustomed to in Paris were the things we always fought shy of in Connecticut."

"Tommy, whenever you begin bragging about *your* moral standards I know you're jealous . . . jealous as a gold-digger's chauffeur. It's good for you. Nothing better than a little groundless jealousy to make a smug young husband take an interest in his wife."

There was something significant in the way she emphasized "wife." Tom appeared to realize, immediately, who had the better of the argument. He realized, too, that he could at any rate never complain that his wife "didn't understand him." Perfect marriage!

In his gay days as a typical young blood, Tom Wethered had joyfully subscribed to the philanderer's dictum: "Marriage is a deluded institution, based on the fallacy that one woman is different from another." But upon mature reflection, checked carefully against the experiences of his then-jaded spirit, Tom Wethered had at twenty-six realized that this dictum might be two-edged. The thought had occurred to him that perhaps, after all, "Philandering is a deluded institution, based on the fallacy that one woman is different from another."

Thus Tom had "discovered" marriage, after long journeying through the mazes of philandering, much as Balboa "discovered" the Pacific, after weary traveling across hot barren land.

But the *real* discovery had been Bernadine. There was a woman! She had made married life as wonderful as Tom had expected it to be—and more.

Then had come Paris . . . giddy days and giddier nights in Paris . . . Paris in springtime, at that. And Bernadine and Tom, with that perfectly natural

inclination of smart young Americans abroad, had raised general Cain. Tom was used to it . . . he was an expert in that sort of thing. And, now that they were returning home, he was ready to settle down again. But Bernadine, quite apparently, wasn't! Paris had changed Bernadine.

Tom reflected on this change as he sat quietly contemplating her as she smoked her cigarette with an insouciant air that was openly admired by some thirty or so passing male promenaders . . .

"Yes," he reflected, "she's a damn sight more dashing than she was—and a damn sight more difficult!"

"Well," she roused him, "is your little lecture really over? Haven't you anything further to say, aside from what you've already said, that Papa hates to see Mama doing what Papa has tired of doing himself?"

"Bunk and you know it! Why, I haven't looked twice at a single damn female since Paris—"

"Cherbourg, as I recall it," she corrected him sweetly.

"Have it your way, you always do, eventually—but, anyway, I haven't looked—"

"Good reason, too. In fact, the very best! When there's nothing worth looking at, I think it is commendable that you refrain—"

"Oh, hell, will you argue all day when I'm trying—"

"I certainly will not!" And with a glance at her wrist watch which may have been inspired merely by habit, Bernadine rose and stepped briskly away from the little wicker table, past other little wicker tables, out to the line of boxed evergreens which made the informal demarcation between the cafe proper and the rail-side promenade. And from behind one of the evergreens—inspired, maybe, by simply a lucky flair for good old Coincidence—sauntered a very nice and absurdly young Russian.

Tom settled down in preparation for some heavy thinking.

"Well," he thought, "if I can't *talk* her out of it, maybe I can stew up some better way. Let's see, 'there's nothing better than a little groundless jealousy to make a smug young husband . . .'. Well, then, why shouldn't that—" but his half-formed plan of action was interrupted, then given a sudden completion, by the arrival at the next table of a quite striking brunette, with ravishing sloe eyes. Tom's thoughts turned into a new and highly promising direction.

Tom knew, as indeed everyone knows, that there are two kinds of women who are likely to be traveling alone on Trans-Atlantic liners: those who *are* school teachers returning from their vacations, and—those who aren't! This one, it appeared, wasn't.

Tom lost no time.

"Young lady, would you care to earn fifty dollars?"

"You are blunt, not to say rude!"

"Sorry." His warm smile roused her interest. "We'll make it a hundred, then."

"Sir!" Her effort to appear shocked just failed, as she no doubt intended, to be convincing.

"This is strictly a business proposition. As a matter of fact, you can qualify for the job right now."

"First, let me see if you can talk to me as though you were really deeply in love with me." She of the sloe eyes tried, and succeeded very well. It wasn't hard. Tom was handsome—and he had shown her the century note.

"That's fine. Now if you will kindly repeat after me . . ." So, Tom and the ambitious young lady rehearsed, at some length, an amorous dialogue.

"You'll do splendidly," he told her, finally. "Meet me tonight, after dinner, in the lounge on 'A' Deck. That's the one adjoining the ballroom, where the

dancers sit it out—and out—and out—in the chummy little alcoves."

In the little alcove it was cool, and almost dark. The sea breeze, blowing through the partly open window, was toying with Bernadine's hair, murmuring in her ear, and caressing her hot cheeks. So was the young Russian, as a matter of fact.

While Bernadine was vainly endeavoring to remember how many drinks of champagne she had had, the young Russian was talking to her in a low impassioned tone.

"I think," thought Bernadine, "that it . . ." her thought was pretty vague, "that it . . . must have been . . . an awful lot of champagne."

The young Russian was talking. She tried to remember what his name was . . . Count Alexis . . . Something-off . . . or Somethingavitch. With an effort, she roused herself to listen to what he was saying.

"Love lends its most exquisite moments to those few who can appreciate them. We are young, you and I. We have hovered near love's magic portal. We are of those chosen few who can penetrate to the innermost sanctum. Cupidon has breathed his welcome on us tonight. He will not soon come again. Cupidon is a wayward child—he comes not the same way often. Let us accept his bidding tonight—the hospitality of Cupidon—is it not the finest thing this world affords us? Come—you draw away? But why? What is this—you falter? Beauty like yours is dedicated to love. Is not your perfect body love's most lovely chalice? Come—"

"But Tom—" With the outer fringe of her consciousness, Bernadine clung to Tom's name as she might have clung to a charm to ward off the evil eye, as she might have clutched a wisp of straw on the surface of waters that were closing over her head.

She wanted to run away from this too-sweet temptation—wanted to run to Tom. Poor Tom, lonely for her, no doubt, at that moment! She must go to him. She loved him. She wanted—

There was the faint stir of sound which meant that some other couple had taken possession of the next alcove. There was the soft light sound—the unique sound of a grown woman talking baby-talk. There was the smooth deep sound of a man's voice engaged in love-talk. And the voice sounded distressingly like Tom's!

Bernadine sprang up, thrusting herself from Alexis' clasp by one deft maneuver. With her finger tips she found his lips, and enjoined him to silence. Then pressing her ear close to the crack where the alcove partition joined the outer wall of the lounge, she listened, breathless—

"Oh, Tom, will it be like this from now on? Will you love me from this night forward as you have loved me in the past?"

"Zada, you know I will. You know the power you have over me. You know that for you I will cast everything aside—to follow you to the ends of the earth!"

There was a stupendous sigh, followed by a little eternity of silence. Then the villainous Tom resumed—

"Of course, there are one or two unimportant matters which I must clear up eventually. For example, my wife—"

"Oh—h—h, Tom! How could you? You never told me you were married!"

"Didn't I, really? Well, it slips my mind when I'm with you, darling. I can think of nothing but you. But that's perfectly all right. There'll be some young fellow who will take her off my hands. Now give me your sweet lips again, dearest."

"O—o—o, Tomkin." Another long silence.

Through Bernadine there surged a delicious abandon—a desire to shriek, to

laugh wildly, to cry. She felt hysteria fastening its grip upon her.

Her husband and first lover, a promiscuous petty love-snatcher! So this was the man who had preached to her!

Under this sudden emotional stress, the effect of the champagne was redoubled. Bernadine's mind was a motley merry-go-round, with but one coherent thought spinning madly in her brain. "There'll be some young fellow who will take her off my hands, there'll be some young fellow who will . . ." Yes, she would be off his hands—she would show him—she would—

She threw herself at the bewildered Count Alexis Feodor Makarov, embracing him madly, hysterically pouring an effusion of endearments upon him . . .

Once alone with Alexis, away from the lounge and the other people, Bernadine's blind resolution began to falter. She was frightened; she wanted to dash back to Tom. But the thought of Tom's perfidy was too much. She must square accounts with Tom—in kind.

She faced Alexis coolly, with a defiant taunting note of invitation in her voice.

"We were speaking of a wayward little chap named Cupidon, if I remember—"

Alexis moved toward her impulsively, but checked himself, apparently taken aback by the incomprehensible manner of Americans.

"We both need a strong drink, I guess. I've heard of *vodka* all my life, but I've never tried it. You don't happen to have any?"

Alexis, like one rudely awakened from a trance, moved to the buffet and picked up a crested decanter of hammered silver.

Bernadine took the tiny glass, saw Alexis down his drink with evident relish—followed by a revived interest in her—then raised her own to her lips. Ugh! Dynamite! But she downed it, determinedly.

She felt, rather than saw, Alexis ap-

proach, pick her up in his arms, and hold her there like a cradled baby. He bent his flushed face over hers . . . and in that moment, for all she knew afterward, Bernadine Wethered died, her last impression that of hot breath upon her face and two bright glittering serpent-eyes boring down into her consciousness.

Bernadine opened one eye—then quickly opened both eyes wide. A strange room, a strange bed, a strange dressing table—conspicuous at once for the total absence of women's toilet accessories. A man's stateroom!

She shrank down between the sheets, not daring to look about for fear of being obliged to meet the mocking gaze of her host—whoever *he* might be! She was lying on her right side, her face turned toward the edge of the bed. As she became fully awake, she felt the startling awareness that her bed was shared with a bed-fellow.

Had the man no delicacy at all? Wouldn't he leave her, to dress and slink off . . . alone with the shame that was, after all, her own private business? Was he awake? She did not dare look, afraid that he might be! His breathing was regular, but not heavy. He sounded like a waking person.

Her ruminations were given a terrifying interruption. A brawny hand clasped her bare shoulder. With a startled quick glance out of the corner of her eyes she saw a pajama sleeve-cuff of maroon silk—

With a scream she leapt out of bed, catching up her evening gown to provide covering. She turned to face the man—

"Hello, blonde Angora! Penny for your nightmare." Tom Wethered lay back in bed, grinning broadly. "How y'like the trick pajamas I borrowed from our friend Makarov?"

Bernadine began to cry, increasing

her attractiveness one hundred per cent—if two hundred per cent attractiveness is a possibility. "W—what happened?"

"Well, come back to bed, before you pick up pneumonia, and maybe I'll tell you. At that, you're rather young and unsophisticated to hear such a story."

"B—but, Tommy, please tell me what happened."

"Everything—and nothing. To begin at the end, you gave me rather a surprise by coming down to this stateroom last night, and fearing that you might be acting against the well-known Best Interests of All Concerned, I ditched my party to come along on yours, as a sort of trailer."

"But did I come here alone with the Count?" Her tone was one of utter incredulity.

"Yes, and he took the count soon after I arrived. Not that I'd brag much about that, though, because he was a most nobly drunken young man. But, well, I almost lost my temper. So he left in some haste and much disorder. And I figured as long as we held the fort, we might just as well stay here—particularly since you weren't in your best walking form."

"I'm beginning to remember now. Yes, and I remember what *you* did, and, as usual, it was worse!"

"I admit it was a bum job. I saw you and young whatsisname go into the alcove—and I saw that you had a champagne head as a handicap. Well, as you seem to recall, I trooped into the next alcove with—with a lady-friend, acting on a grand hunch that didn't seem to work. You remember you prescribed a little groundless jealousy as a sure cure for the waning interest of young—well, I thought that might just possibly work both ways, but—"

"O—o—o, Tommy boy, it has! And—and I think you're utterly sweet!"

Bernadine snuggled her little blonde head beneath her husband's.

The Spice of Life



Mr. and Mrs. Return from the Party:

"Sylvia looked awfully pretty to-night, didn't you think?" said Brenda.

"She was stunning!" agreed Gerald.

"Of course, she looks prettier at some times than at others, don't you think?"

"Oh, of course."

"Funny how changeable some girls are, isn't it?"

"Yes, it **is** funny."

"I suppose the real **test** of beauty is to look pretty **all** the time, don't you?"

"**You** do."

"Don't be absurd—I don't at all!"

"I think you do, really."

"Well, it's perfectly sweet of you to say so."

"Well, it's the truth."

"My word, Sylvia looked pretty to-night!"

"But you look prettier."

"Don't be absurd—but it's awfully sweet of you to think so."

FELT SMALLER STILL

He was a very slim man, and he sat in the omnibus. She was very stout, and stood. The slim man got up and, after digging the woman in the back repeatedly, managed to draw her attention.

"Won't you have my seat?" he inquired politely.

The woman peered towards the place he had just vacated and looked very puzzled.

Finally she turned round to the slim man.

"But whose lap were you sitting on?" she asked.



"Is that an exciting book?"

"It all depends on what you call exciting. This has two murders in it."

"Ah, just the sort I like! A book with a bit of life in it."

DORIS—"I think he's the meanest man on earth. I've made up my mind to refuse him, and he won't even propose to me!"

"YOU OUGHT TO HAVE
FLOWN TO HER ASSISTANCE."
"I COULDN'T; I'D 'FLU."

* * *

RIGHT!

BARBER (to little 13-year-old girl)—
*Are you sure you want your hair
shingled that far up, little girl?*

LITTLE GIRL—*You're d - n right.
And snap into it; I gotta dinner date at
seven.*

—Sun Dial.

* * *



HE—*"Would you be angry with me
if I asked you to be my wife?"*

SHE—*"Not at all. But I'd be furious
with myself if I agreed to."*

IMMENSE

PLUMBER—I've come to fix that old
tub in the kitchen.

YOUNGSTER—*Mama, here's the doc-
tor to see the cook.*

—Cynic.

There was an old lad of Peru,
Who dreamed that his youngest wife,
Sue,

Was kissing his valet,
Then woke up and bally
Well found it was perfectly true.

* * *



SURPRISE!

CHARLIE (after hours of prelim)—
Gimme a kiss?

MARIE—Ah, me! so you, too, are like
the rest of the men!

CHARLIE (with feeling)—Yes!

MARIE—Thank goodness.

—Panther.

IN THE HALL

HE (quickly drawing away as
footsteps are heard)—Was that a
faux pas?

SHE (sweetly)—No. That was a
pappa.

—Bison.

An Innocent Sinner

"I live it over in a perfect agony of remorse, and often resolve to tell my husband ^{all} about it in the morning—and yet I know I never can—could you?" writes this girl in her heart-rending story of her betrayal

"I listened to hear if he had gone and then decided to tell my husband nothing about it."





Y husband and I decided to marry against our parents' wishes and consequently were thrown upon our own resources immediately after our marriage.

We both lived, at the time of our wedding, in New B. a small town in the Middle West, where opportunities are few and life is more or less a cut and dried proposition. My husband's father was president of the local bank, and my father was the town postmaster.

Robert had always worked for his father, beginning practically as a messenger boy in the bank when he was very young, and gradually working himself up by degrees to the position of "Assistant Cashier." It was his father's desire to have him become, technically, a "self-made" man. That is, his father wished him to earn all of his laurels as he went along, just as though he were a perfect stranger employed by the bank.

The idea was, of course, an excellent one, but the salary of an assistant cashier in a small bank in a diminutive city is hardly one that would support a wife. The fact of my husband's having had such an excellent training, however, stood us in good stead later on.

Immediately following our marriage a quarrel occurred between father and son, and, as my father was not well enough off to give us material assistance even if my husband had been willing to accept it, we left at once for C—a large city quite some distance from New B.

We anticipated great difficulties in getting along financially in the larger city, but we were too much in love to let this daunt us. When we arrived we found, to our intense relief, that the difficulties we had visualized were largely imaginary—so far as the financial part was concerned. Neither of us, in our naivety, took into considera-

tion trouble that might befall us from another source, least of all myself—and if Robert ever thought of it, he kept it to himself, believing staunchly in me as, indeed, he had every right to.

You see, I was supposed to be a very pretty girl. I had a slim, graceful figure that, out in the Middle West where we had come from, was considered "anaemic," but in the city, as I could see by the rather bold glances cast at me, it was considered differently. Living, as I had, all my life in a small town, I had naturally rosy cheeks, and a skin white and soft "as a swan's throat," as Robert used to say. My eyes were large, I thought, even awkwardly so, and brown, and my hair was a natural golden color and very light and fluffy. I suppose, to the blasé city man who was a monster—and I suppose there are a few of those in every city—I looked almost startlingly fresh and innocent. At first, their all too easily understandable staring at me, which began with my face and ended at my shoe tops, annoyed me terribly; but, gradually I got used to it, and forgot all about it; and, as I say, Robert never gave such things a thought. I considered myself perfectly safe, so much so in fact, that I suppose a sophisticated city girl would have called what happened to me later on all my own fault. But it wasn't, not to any degree, unless ignorance upon a matter which it is thought correct, in small towns to be ignorant upon, could be called a blameworthy fault.

Robert and I had quite a little "lover's spat," with each other the first few days in town. Robert had managed to save up a few hundred dollars while at the bank, and he insisted that we live on that while he was hunting work and we were getting settled. I objected and declared that we should do nothing of the kind, rather, I insisted upon finding a position and paying for our room and meals out of that, instead of using up our entire capital at the

very start. It took quite a lengthy and somewhat heated argument to persuade my husband that it would only be a temporary measure, but finally he gave in.

I remember the day I came home proudly to announce that I had a position. Robert was sitting in the room looking rather mournful and glum, he had been out hunting a position all morning.

"Well, dear," I greeted him, "I go to work at Mosley's department store, tomorrow, at eighteen a week. Of course that won't pay our expenses, but it will help some." He smiled a little sadly, and I saw his jaws set. The next evening when we both got home *he* had something to say as he took me into his arms to kiss me and stroke my throat—he loved to run one finger up and down my throat for some reason or other.

"Got a job at the Citizen's National," he announced, "you can quit your job now and take it easy keeping house."

"Nothing doing!" I insisted, "I'm going to help, too. How much are you going to get?"

"Forty a week!" he beamed at me. That was over twice what he had been getting at home.

"Then our combined income is fifty-eight dollars a week," I reminded him. "That would lift every mortgage in town, back home, in time. I'm going to keep right on working. We'll save our money, and when we've got enough, we'll pay it down on a home, and start buying our own house on the installment plan." Robert didn't look so sure about this at first. He watched me dubiously for a moment; but, with a sudden swoop, he caught me up into his arms and kissed me.

"All right little woman!" he said, surrendering, "this is going to be a fifty-fifty marriage; I'm not going to try to have all the say—those days are gone forever." I thought he was the sweetest thing that ever lived, and told

him so. Gee! we were happy those first days.

We got along perfectly great, and saved lots of money. Finally, however, I guess we got greedy, and I, at least, was punished for it. Instead of being satisfied with the progress we had made, and going ahead very slowly, we only wanted more right away. We wanted to get the house we had started to buy on the installment plan paid for and start buying another one to rent out right away—we wanted everything and we wanted it quick—mostly it was me I think. Robert wanted me to quit work right along—but I kept on working with a sort of feverish impatience. Not satisfied with this, I insisted upon taking in a roomer in our new house. And so it happened that we accepted one, while I continued to do the house work after my day's work at the store and Robert went on with a night school course in banking law that he had taken up. Our roomer, Mr. S. seemed to be a decent sort and he impressed my husband favorably from the start. He was employed as an engineer on a project in the vicinity and was willing to pay a very high rate for his room, as the concern for which he worked stood all the expenses.

About two weeks after he had come to live with us I came home from work one evening to find him there earlier than usual. He stood around and watched me do the housework, talking interestingly all the while of his employment and the undertakings that he had worked on in nearly every part of the globe.

Although I was rather embarrassed having him watching me do my routine work that way, I couldn't help being interested in the things he was telling me. It seemed as though he had been everywhere and seen everything.

Finally he insisted upon taking a hand in the housework and tried awkwardly to assist me with everything I touched. At last I began intuitively to sense

something aside from a friendly desire to help in his attitude, although he had been very polite, even formal, up to this time. Soon I had nothing left to do but his room and was starting to make up his bed.

To my intense embarrassment he followed me even in there and insisted upon standing at one side of the bed to help me spread the covers. I was becoming more and more alarmed by his actions and his now increasingly flippant manner.

"Really, Mr. S.," I blurted out in exasperation at last, "I would much prefer that you go now and let me do this work alone. I am thoroughly accustomed to it and have always had a regular system for attending to it. I appreciate your desire to be of assistance, but—" To my surprise and indignation he dropped the side of the sheet that he had been holding, walked swiftly around the bed, and, coming close to me, looked intently down into my eyes. His own were deep brown and somehow dangerous looking—at least they made me feel afraid.

"Little girl," he began, "I know that you could probably get along better without my clumsy efforts. That's not why I've persisted in puttering around and meddling with your work, like the awkward ass that I am. It's because I want to be near you. You're the most fascinating little woman I've ever seen in my life, and I've known lots and lots of women who considered themselves, and were considered by many others, beauties."

I was twenty-one then, and, having had absolutely no experience in such situations I was at a disadvantage with the handsome, traveled and deeply sophisticated engineer. Noting my evident dismay and lack of knowledge as to how properly to handle the situation he rushed on.

"It nearly breaks my heart," he breathed, seemingly with deep emotion, "to see you slaving away day after day

to satisfy the greedy acquisitional desires of a thoughtless husband. He doesn't love you; his only true love is for money, he looks upon you only as a means to an end."

Instantly I was up in arms, for while I could not fence in repartee with the man, any reference to my darling husband roused my wrath instantly.

"That's all nonsense," I declared angrily. "My husband has tried, in every way, to make me stop working. I'm doing this of my own free will and over his strenuous objections. Don't dare," I added with increasing self-confidence, noticing that he was somewhat taken aback by my sudden vehement defense of my husband, "say another word against Robert." To my chagrin he didn't seem at all put out by my manner. He just smiled and went on:

"Now! you *are* irresistible! You're the bravest, most honorable little woman I ever met, besides being, as I said before, the most beautiful. You're distractingly pretty under any circumstances, but when you wrinkle up your little forehead in a frown, and pucker up those tiny red lips in a pout, and your brown eyes flash with anger—you're absolutely superb!" He moved toward me, grasped me in his strong arms and forced a kiss that burned like fire upon my unwilling lips. That roused me to instant action. I struck out at him desperately, raining blow after blow upon his face with my clenched fists until he stood back and scowled at me in anger.

"You little wench!" he snarled, changing completely, and looking suddenly like the beast that he was, "I was only trying to be nice to you! I'd take you away with me to see the world if you had an ounce of common sense; but, no," he sneered, running his hand through his hair angrily, "you want to remain here and become a slatternly old housewife! All right, have it your own way," he shrugged, as though he

had only to dismiss the subject after all he had done, "if you want to be a slave to that young boob of a husband of yours and spend the rest of your life helping him to pile up dollars that he'll probably spend on some other woman when you grow less attractive—that's your business.

"You'd better get out of here before my husband gets home," I suggested ominously, "when he comes in and I tell him what's happened there'll be an awful fight around here." He threw back his head and roared; but it was forced laughter, and I could see that he was fighting mad back of it.

"Indeed!" he mimicked, in a mocking falsetto tone, "so you think that little pale-faced wart could beat me up! Well, I'll tell you what I'm going to do, young lady of the so impregnable virtues; I'm going to remain right here until my work in town is finished, next month. If you want to set that anaemic hubby of yours on me, go right ahead; I'll tie him in a sailor's knot and hang him up on his own chandelier like a Christmas wreath." I left his room then and went into our bedroom, shut and locked the door, and sat down to think.

It came to me very clearly that it would be better not to tell Robert anything about it at all. Undoubtedly, if he heard of it, he would attempt to fight—and while S. was almost exactly the same size as Robert, he was many times the stronger man. If he worsted my husband in a fistic encounter, as he was almost sure to, I felt equally sure Robert would go and get a gun, for it would infuriate him to the point of almost any desperate act to hear that I had been grossly insulted. The possibilities that might lie in the situation terrified me as I thought it over. I finally decided that the most sensible thing to do, under the circumstances, would be to let the whole matter stand as it was, and take care in the future

not to get home at night until Robert did.

S. ignored me after that, paying not the slightest attention to me in any way, except to speak civilly when my husband was around. When Robert wasn't present he didn't even deign to look at me.

Lulled into a false sense of security by his disarming actions I tried to forget the whole incident, comforting myself with the knowledge that, as everyone in town knew, the engineering job upon which S. was employed would be completed in another three weeks, and he would therefore have to leave for the next job, which, in all probability, would be thousands of miles away. I hoped it would be on the other side of the globe. I was not at all troubled by my conscience for not having told Robert about everything. In fact, I felt that I had done the very best thing in not doing so. There was no telling what might have happened if I had, and by remaining quiet everything had, apparently, adjusted itself; the man was going where I would never see him again, and Robert, who was working and studying terribly hard had been saved a lot of trouble. Right here let me say, for the benefit of those wives who may read this, and who are yet fortunate enough never to have had anything of an untoward nature happen to them: when something of this kind occurs, go, instantly to friend husband; he will know how to handle it some way—women don't apparently.

The Christmas holidays were coming on about this time. Both Robert and I were terribly busy. I was forced to work every evening until ten o'clock, and Robert was away even later at the bank. Each morning he rose an hour earlier than I and rushed into town to get an early start on the work caused by the tremendous amount of transactions incident to the Christmas shopper's movement of money. The last week be-



He moved toward me, grasped me in his strong arms and forced a kiss that burned like fire upon my unwilling lips.

fore Christmas was the climax—it was terrible! It seemed to me as though I was just going along in a dream. I worked so hard during the day at the store that I couldn't eat lunch at noon, but could only sit and try to gather together my wits for the afternoon whirl. It just seemed as though one day merged into another like some

horrible, gigantic kaleidoscope shifting about dizzily. Night after night I came home completely exhausted able only to undress and drop into bed. When Robert came in he did not turn on the light for fear of annoying me, but dropped into bed even more greatly exhausted than I. Mornings he was gone before even I arose, we never

saw each other once during that whole week. It is all a blur to me now; I can't even describe it; like, perhaps, one horribly long day lasting a week.

Christmas morning came and I awoke with a sense of intense relief, realizing that it meant a whole day to ourselves at last. I was unusually happy that day, for it marked a turning point in our affairs. We had decided that I should stop working the first of the year; Robert had been promoted to the position of assistant cashier, which carried a salary, in that bank, of seventy-five dollars per week. Our house was completely paid for now and we would be able, financially, to build another one for renting that summer. S. had left a note, enclosed in an envelope with his last rent money, saying that he was going home for Christmas and would not return—everything seemed to be simply perfect; and yet, it turned out to be the most miserable Christmas day of my entire life.

Immediately upon waking I thought of Robert; he was not in the room—I supposed that he had risen before me and was down stairs, possibly preparing some surprise or other for me—he was always doing something like that.

What was my astonishment to discover that he was nowhere in the house and had not been, so far as I could see, that whole night. While I was looking about the place trying to understand what had become of him the door bell rang and the florist's boy delivered an immense box. Opening it hastily, and in complete mystification, I found a beautiful bunch of American Beauty Roses, with a card which stated formally that they had been telegraphed from New York by Mr. Robert—my husband.

Seating myself quietly in a chair I tried calmly to puzzle it all out. The more I thought the more mystified I became. At last I went to the phone and called up a friend of Robert's who worked at the same bank.

Robert had been away in New York the whole week preceding Christmas, and yet I seemed distinctly to remember his having come home every night except Christmas Eve!

It was later in the day that I found Robert's note.

As I was wandering distractedly through the house, trying to stifle the sobs that constantly shook my body, and the shame which seemed momentarily about to engulf me in an awful, black chasm, I found myself in the room S. had occupied. Oh, how I loathed the thought of him—then! A ball of crumpled paper in one corner of the room caught my eye. Straightening it out with tear-dimmed eyes I read my husband's note which he had probably left about the house, somewhere, before going, thinking I would of course see it immediately, notifying me of his trip to New York for the bank. It was dated six days previous and said that he would not return before the night of Christmas day.

Searching further I found crumpled telegrams that had arrived for me during the day while I was working, and two letters, one of which expressed wonderment at my not having written him. It was then that full realization of the terrible thing that S. had perpetrated came to me in all its grim ghastliness!

This all happened over twelve years ago. My husband is now a vice-president in the institution where he started, while I am a highly respected integral member of the social life of the little suburb in which we live. Six years ago I read of S.'s death at the hands of some native bandits in China. No one has ever heard this story, but in the still hours of the night, when past memories steal back to torture for a time, I live it over in a perfect agony of remorse, and often resolve that I will tell my husband all about it in the morning—and yet—I know perfectly well that I never can. . . . Could you?



Teddy Talbot Tattles

*A girl named Teddy
Took off her clothes,
Climbed into bed
And fell in a doze.*

*In came a boy friend
At half-past eight,
But Teddy never knew it
Till just . . . too . . . late.*



PARIS is so informal. And Dick was to blame, because didn't he go and take a drink of water. Yes sir, that was the first thing Dick had to go and do after he

dashed into my hotel to resume our interrupted honeymoon. Well, almost the first thing. I warned him against it. So did the hotel keeper. "Our water," he pleaded, "of eet we are not proud. Eet is greatly to be regretted that eet is but fit to wash the hands—but we

have of the choicest wines . . . ah . . ." he snacked his lips soulfully. Dick was unmoved.

* * *

Also thirsty. Before anyone could stop him, he had swallowed a glass of the poisonous fluid. The manager shrugged his shoulders non-committally; in a moment he returned. "I have sent for monsieur le docteur," he announced.

* * *

Nursing a man that's taken a drink of French water isn't my idea of a honeymoon in Paris. I confided as much to our saucy little chit of a chambermaid, who agreed with me so strongly that I became very suspicious and didn't speak of it again. But as dusk fell that evening, I went amusement-hunting alone.

* * *

The Folies Bergere were vastly overrated, I decided. After a few mild thrills from watching the audience in the half-lit pit instead of the players, I left with the crowd and wandered along the boulevard. Above my head colored

lights gleamed invitingly as they spelled the name "Jolie Pêche" over an arched portal.

* * *

I entered the cabaret door. A flight of narrow steps wormed its way into a cellar. The third one down was my Waterloo. I catapulted headlong into the dim basement with its crowds of drinking couples and threesomes and lonesomes.

* * *

Red with pretty confusion I regained my balance by a convulsive effort. A wave of applause met my astonished ears. "Encore," the Franchies shouted. "Vive l'Americaine! Charleston! Hey! Hey!"

I scuttled to a corner table. Five or six garçons helped me into a chair. "*Vin rouge . . . blanc . . . ?*" one suggested.

"If that's a fish course I don't want it," I said. "Come again."

"Un liqueur, peut-etre?"

"Uh-huh. A liquor, if that's how you feel about it. What? How do I know what sort it is. Bring me some and I'll soon tell you."

* * *

The boy was so dumb I couldn't get it across. A polished Frenchie with a Legion of Honor medal or a French door-key or something dangling from his waistcoat came over to my table and bowed elaborately. I received the impression he hoped to be permitted to help me select my drinks. I was right, and he could select all he wanted.

* * *

They moved up a chair. The door-key turned out to be a bottle opener. "Pop!" said the champagne bottles. "Pa-pa!" said Teddy.

* * *

All in all it was a large evening, and we got along famously, even if I couldn't speak much of his funny language.

So the minutes passed until it was time to go and I asked if he would take

me back to my hotel. I swear that's what I asked him, in my very best French.

* * *

Anyway his face lights up all over with a crinkly smile that young Frenchies seem to have all their own, and he beams and says, "*Oui, oui,*" he says, and takes me to his.

* * *

They all look alike to me, but I see this place has an unfamiliar doorman. I stop right there and we sit down on the steps and have a little talk. He's nice and I show him the error of his ways; and escaping unscathed except for a few extraordinary kisses, I make my way back to my own hostelry that turns out to be just half a block away.

* * *



As usual the elevators in L'Americaine weren't working, so I was out of breath when I reached our room at the sixth landing. What I saw when I opened the door took away my breath still more.

* * *

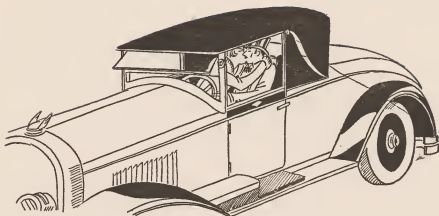
It was my error—I'd thought Dick was a sick man.

* * *

Casting a dirty look at the chambermaid, I leave in haste. Where to? How did I know?

* * *

Then down the street a light flashed up in a window, and I did know. Never



do for a girl to walk the Paris streets in the middle of the night. Might not be safe. So I went down the block and marched into Frenchie's hotel. He was awfully glad to see me.

* * *

He apologized for his room. "My former roommate had no taste," he said naively. "I have not yet begun to make of the re-arrangements."

"Let's not start now," I said, "I'm sleepy."

* * *

Frenchie may have been unused to the ways of these mad Americans but he recovered nobly. "I trust you sleep well," he said as he bowed me into the adjoining bedroom.

"And I hope you don't," I observed to myself. I liked his face.

* * *

What's your guess? I won't tell. Anyway when I did open my eyes the next morning the sun was streaming in across my bed and there were gurgles from the next room where Frenchie was taking a bath. Where he got the tub was a mystery . . . they're something of a novelty in France.

So after a while the gurgles cease and I hear a pit-pat into the next room. Perilously clad in a bath-towel I tiptoe into the bath and prepare to close the door . . . when Frenchie comes back for the moustache wax!

* * *

I stand there paralyzed. Frenchie is beaming all over. "Une decouverte!" he cries.

* * *

"I'll say 'uncovered' is right," I managed feebly, looking about for the nearest exit.

"Non, no! I mean eet is to say what you call a 'find' . . . a deescoveree! Ma fois, mademoiselle, you are of the type the most rare . . . I have of you the utmost need, would you but care . . ."

* * *

"Go on, tell me you want to marry me," I prompted.

He gesticulates wildly. I gather he doesn't. Then it all comes out.

* * *

He is the *managere* of the Jolie Peche, the speediest little cabaret in Paris and incidentally the one I fell

into. For long, he says, has he had need of a dancer who had that *je-ne-sais-quoi* . . . that *souçon* . . . a whole flock of things it seems that I've got.

If I would but name my own figure to amuse the gay Parisians, the smartly gowned women, the rich Americans that gather at his resort . . . Would I? You know the answer.

* * *

Whee! I stood in the little dressing room and looked at my flimsy costume in the cheval mirror. I didn't have many secrets left, but it was certainly a costume. I hooked up the one shoulder-strap it boasted and then came the bell that gave me my cue.

* * *

Everybody was there. The Prefect of Police held down one of the ringside tables, and the Lord Mayor another. I just knew that lady I saw him with wasn't his wife. Then the orchestra let go and I started to dance.

* * *

I must have gone over big. They all wanted more, the dear people, and when I finally did go off I couldn't hardly get into the dressing room; it was piled so high with roses. Then Frenchie comes in and tells me how beautiful I am, and after awhile I am to return, and he kisses me on the left shoulder and departs. Little Teddy's a success!

* * *

After awhile I'm back. New faces now. The Prefect's gone and a young American chap, alone, is making for his table. My Gawd—it's Dick, as big as life—and awfully pale! He looks like he's going to die most any minute.

* * *

Little cold chills run up and down my back when I think of what's going to happen when Dick sees me there—and takes in how I'm spending my time away from home. Well, wasn't he to blame?

I go on dancing, thinking fast. Men are so unreasonable—and then even though Dick just can't resist a pretty face, to put it mildly, he's not as bad as some men . . . Maybe I could forgive him if I ever get out of here without his knowing it . . .

* * *

And then Dick looks my way as I'm edging off the floor. Slowly a great light dawns upon me. He doesn't recognize me with all my grease paint on!

* * *



That's different! I finish my number, bow to the nice gentlemen who applaud, and amble over to where Dick is sitting, his head on his elbows. Off-stage I glimpse Frenchie beaming all over at me. That was his idea all along—to cheer up the guests. Just watch me, Frenchie!

* * *

I was a little worried Dick would know me, but several glasses of anisette had done their dirty work. He looked up quick as I came over, started to smile and dragged out a chair for me. I take it and drape an arm kind of casual around his shoulder.

* * *

Frenchie is tickled pink, I can see that. I can just imagine him singing the Marseillaise or something. I guess I'm a good entertainer 'cause pretty

soon Dick's forgotten his troubles and he's laughing and making amorous passes at me that I manage somehow to evade.

* * *

"Naughty Americain," I tell him, "you must teach ze hands to stay where zey belong!"

"Sorry," Dick says. "Have some champagne. Have a liquer. Gimme a kiss."

Just for that I decide to rub it in.

* * *

Before long we have a date for three A. M. at the Hotel Concierge. He slips a few million francs in my hand, to buy me a new hat I'll surprise him with some day, and out he goes.

* * *

I can hardly wait to finish, I'm bursting so with excitement. Years and years seem to pass, and then the quitting time. I dash into my street clothes, grab a taxi, and race over to the Hotel Concierge.

There's Dick, his coat collar turned up and his hat pulled down over his eyes, walking up and down in front of the hotel. Guess he must imagine he's in disguise. Anyway I hop out of the cab, and he comes running over.

That disappearing hack leaves us standing there in the early morning darkness. Dick takes me in his arms and crushes me half to death, and then tries to tell me in French how much he loves me!

"But you are perhaps married, mon-sier?" I can't resist asking him.

* * *

He waves his hand in an airy gesture that implies marriage has always been the furthest thing from his thoughts. That settles it—he's going to have it brought closer home to him! So I take his arm and we walk up the steps and into the hotel where he has a love nest waiting . . .

* * *

Many hours later. Yes, we've made up. He's forgiven me and I've forgiven him and we're so happy! I mean we're awfully happy.

* * *

But we're leaving Paris. Where? I don't know. Why? Because . . . well, it's a little too distracting. You know what I mean. So we're off again, blowing kisses as we go to everyone within gunshot . . . bye-bye!



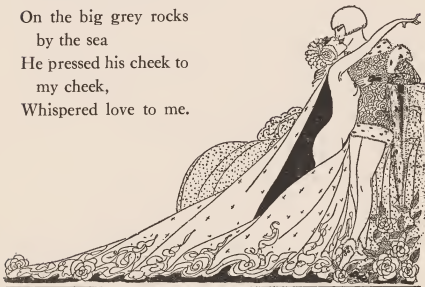
Dawn, Wind and Mist

By Louis Arthur Cunningham

LIGHT as the dawn
wind's rustle
Over the laughing lea
My love bent down and
kissed me,
Kissed me tenderly.

COOL as the spume
wind-driven
On the big grey rocks
by the sea
He pressed his cheek to
my cheek,
Whispered love to me.

I OPENED my eyes
... from dreaming.
He would never come
to me
Save in the dawn wind's
rustle,
In driven spume of the
sea.



I'll Be Right Over

By Lewis Arthur

When hubby goes off on an amorous mission on Sunday night, does wife sit by the radio listening to the minister's moral advice?



IT had not been such a hard job at that, reflected Mr. Alfred Potter. Pharia hadn't even asked his reason for wanting to be foot-loose on Sunday night, though she knew jolly well he was not going to a revival meeting. Probably she suspected a session with some kindred spirits at poker or maybe a modest drunk in some sweet secluded spot. Anyway, she merely nodded when Alf announced about seven o'clock that he would be away for the evening, which meant half the night.

She was preparing to bathe at the time and had nothing much on but a coat of tan. Always she reminded Alf of a big blond beast. "Too damnably voluptuous to be as innocent as she is," he told himself, admiring the opulence of her body. But Pharia rated with Caesar's wife and a minister's ten-year-old daughter when it came time for reproach.

It was seven-thirty by the big clock in the Belvoort lobby when Alf, foolish, fat and forty, ambled out of the elevator and sauntered across the arabesque tiling to the cigar-counter.

The feverish blonde behind the glass-case gave Alf a glance of burning adoration which he accepted along with his cigars as casually as he left the coupons aside. He knew he was irresisti-

ble, but the allurements for him of this blonde with the snaky hips was nil this Sunday night. Who bothers with a goose-girl when Helen of Troy is due to call one up on the telephone?

Coffee. Alfred felt a great craving for coffee. Helen had said she would not call before eight-thirty. He would have lots of time to get to his club and hear the joyous yes or the dismal no. "I'm a gay old weasel," Alf teased himself roguishly. "But Pharia is so darned chilly to me and Helen . . ." Helen had eyes in which even a fat man like Alf could lose himself, her hair was black and shiny as polished jet and she had taken special courses in the art of love. Her husband was a matinee-idol. Alf didn't go in for small fry.

The cafeteria-grill across the lobby sent forth a merry tinkling of trencher-tools and gave glimpses of a jovial Sunday-night crowd at dinner. They had very good coffee and, yes, perhaps a little more of that Pimento cheese. Alfred knew his feed-bag.

There was a leather-cushioned corner wherein Alf fitted comfortably. A waiter who looked like Tiger Flowers' kid-brother attended to the ordering of the coffee and cheese . . . and, oh yes, a half-head of lettuce with French sauce. Alf felt like wheat-cakes and honey, but then there would probably be a little supper with Helen and the cheese, lettuce and coffee should hold him for a while.

It was cosy in the corner of the grill. Alf looked benignly about him. All strangers. He and Pharia had taken their suite at the Belvoort only a few weeks ago. They didn't know anyone in the hotel. They had friends aplenty without bothering to look for new ones.

Alfred beamed genially at a pair of co-eds across the grill and registered two more conquests. Why was it that women's resistance simply melted before his twinkling eyes? He decided it was a gift and took another piece of cheese. There was Pharia now; she never looked at another man. Alfred was her hero. She had told him so. He nibbled his lettuce.

"Omigod! That thing!" Right behind Alfred's left ear a radio took hysterics. Alf hated radios with a fat man's hatred. And Sunday night . . . He suspected what was coming. The strident voice of the announcer . . . "The Reverend Patmore Stiff will deliver a five-minute sermon on Marital Fidelity."

Alfred groaned. The co-eds giggled and leaned against each other. People ate more noisily and a waiter dropped a dish of onions.

"Beloved brethren: There is no sin so heinous that the waters of mercy cannot wash . . ."

"Oh yes, dearest, he's gone for the evening and it's quite all right. He never shows up till one . . ."

The noise of cold roast and the gurgling of soup died to a soft piano. What the deuce was the radio doing?

Reverend Patmore Stiff again: "The saving grace will cleanse the soul of leprosy . . ."

"I'm just about to bathe. You'll be over in ten minutes, you say?"

A man's voice: "Yes, Pharia darling. And . . . and may I help dry you . . . ?"

Rev. P. Stiff: "And thus with the pure waters they shall be rendered white as the driven snow . . ."

An unkind hand twirled the silly knobs on the cabinet and bedlam broke loose in the Belvoort grill where silence profound had stilled knives, forks, spoons and tongues.

"Say, that's hot," laughed a youngster sitting close to Alfred. "It's happened before. Someone's private conversation picked up by radio. Rather intimate, eh? I wonder . . ."

Alfred didn't care what he wondered. Alfred's eyes were sticking out like those of a speared fish. He gulped a mouthful of coffee and scalded his tongue. "The damned! . . ." So that was Pharia's game. The big, plump hypocrite! By God, he'd strangle the life out of her! No wonder she didn't object to his going out. She had her own little party arranged for the evening. Help dry her! He would . . . In ten minutes that fellow would be over to see her. Lucky Alfred had wanted coffee, lucky that radio-science is not flawless and still plays tricks.

But who the deuce was the man? Alfred had detected a familiar note in that voice . . . an affected little accent. Who? Who? Barton? No, not likely. Somers? He was out of town. And Pharia was so clever, so secret. He had never suspected her for a moment. Well, he would crash in on this happy celebration.

Neglecting cheese and lettuce Alfred Potter paid his check and hurried into the lobby. Few were coming in at that time. From a corner seat, behind a Sunday paper Alfred could command a view of the street entrance, elevator and stairway; so there he ensconced himself, chewing savagely at his cigar, all the primitive in his mighty being awake, fiercely waiting for a crack at the disrupter of his family-beatitude.

Five minutes, six minutes . . . Time stood still. Alfred thought of Helen's phone-call. Well, he would have time to settle this blighter and tell Pharia where she got off; then he would go to the club and if Helen wanted him . . .

Ten minutes, Alfred's eyes were glued on the revolving doors. They revolved and catapulted a hasty, handsome young man into the lobby. He knew where he was going. He passed only a few feet in front of the fish-eyed Alfred on his way to the elevator.

"Well, I'll be immersed in hot treacle!" Alfred sat limply in his chair, slow to comprehend all that his thoughts portended. The clever devils . . . Pharia and Charlton Gould!

By little degrees the strained and desperate expression of Alfred's moon-like visage softened, first to calm, then to beatific smilingness. "Ha-ha," he chuckled. "Ha, ha, ha;" then glared at a bell-hop who smiled in sympathy. The idea! Perhaps they thought he was crazy. Pharia and Gould thought him a fool. Oh, ha-ha. A fool, was he!

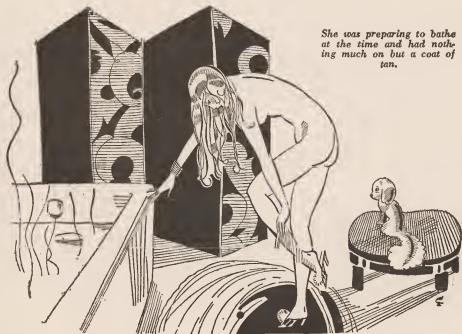
Alfred dashed for a telephone-booth,

shut himself in, lifted the receiver and suddenly dropped it as though it were a stick of dynamite with a lighted fuse. No chance; that radio in the grill . . .

He hurried into the street and looked wild-eyed around. Two blocks away was a drug store. Alfred made it in thirty seconds flat. There he could telephone in peace. But his voice was subdued and slightly disguised when he called Winthrop 5757.

"That you, Helen? Oh, you called me at the club? I was delayed . . . er . . . listening to the radio. You say Charlton is out for the evening? Some theatrical business? Yes, yes, so am I. I'll be over in ten minutes . . . You're bathing? . . . May I? . . . May I help dry . . ."

Then Alfred thought of the loud speaker, said good-bye and dived for a taxi.



She was preparing to bathe at the time and had nothing much on but a coat of tan.



All For Art

Lived there once a girl in Tankville,
She was innocent and sweet
And she longed to see her beauty,
Flashing on the silver sheet.
She had heard of how the famed ones,
Had to make the "sacrifice"
Ere they sparkled in the heavens,
So she too would "pay the price."

She would leave the country village,
Break her yokel lover's heart,
Her career was all that mattered,
She'd give all, yes ALL for art.
So she dressed Nazimoveshish
Kissed the cows and hens good-bye,
Said farewell like Sarah Bernhardt
She would DO, she would not DIE.

When she got there to the city
That is synonym for sin
Not a moment did she falter,
She was ready to begin.
Into studio after studio
She would go both night and day,
Throw herself before directors,
Whisper, "Sir, the price, I'll pay."

by

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But it seems that all directors
Not such awful villains are,
For they only thanked the maiden,
Not one dragged her to his lair.
All in vain the maiden waited
For a chance to whisper "Yes"
But the only thing they asked for—
Was her name and her address.

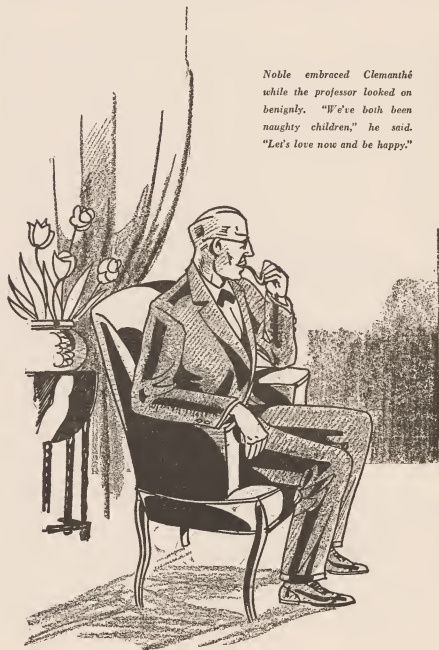
So she left the wicked city
Said, "She did not care to act."
And she journeyed back to Tankville,
And she got there quite—intact.
Now when people ask the maiden
Why she never got a part,
Tragically she makes this answer:
"I would not give ALL for ART."



Menacing Shadows of Her Past

By W. I. T. Beck

Noble embraced Clemanthé while the professor looked on benignly. "We're both been naughty children," he said. "Let's love now and be happy."



A beautiful, spirited girl throws away her right to happiness rather than besmirch the reputation of the man she loves.





IT'S Clemanthé, sir. I love her."

I wasn't surprised. As he hung his brown young head, I envied him his youth. For four months the two'd been in front of me—I'd watched it coming quite pedagogically. In fact, felt a little responsible for it. I'd seated them next to each other the first day. Perhaps Divine Foreknowledge had worked through me—"Tr—" and "Ts—" go together—the "Ts—" at the beginning of her name was curious. I like the old Greek—

"Sir, you're not angry with me?" His penetrating blue eyes pleaded.

"Not at all, Ion—in fact, I congratulate you." I leaned over, knocked out my pipe on one of my favorite hoplite andirons. Then settled back to dream at the modern electric fire—sacrificial fire—immolation of love—love fire—they were young—well, why not—

I felt his hand on my arm—knew what was coming.

"Why did you call me Ion, sir?"

I laughed low, spoke slowly: "An old dramatist, Talfourd, Noble, once wrote a play, with apologies to Euripides, about your Clemanthé. The hero was a noble young votary of the temple at Delphi. Risked his life daily to help the plague-ridden people. You're like that remarkable boy. But"—I hesitated, felt his hand tighten on my arm—"I sometimes wonder—whether—your Clemanthé—is—the girl!"

"What was she like, sir?" His voice was eager; I chose my words carefully.

"She was reared in the temple by the priest—pure and lovely—she tried often to save Ion from his self-destroying ideals—she even told him frankly she loved him—"

"She told me that tonight, sir—but she wept—oh, it was terrible. I wonder why she wept so—"

I ignored the outburst, continued more

deliberately. "Your Clemanthé was raised in Chicago. This city of ours is not precisely a Greek temple. She's been a public dancer—"

"Don't"—he quailed. I felt him stiffen a little in anger—"You have no—"

"Her past is at best obscure, then, Noble. She came to this college I know not why—she's clever, speaks excellent English, better French—has done remarkable work for me—seems wistfully appealing—but there are peculiar lines about her lips—she disappears completely every weekend—"

I whirled on him.

"I know," he murmured mournfully. His renunciation was amazing. "She has a brother—rather successful with a—yes, a restaurant. She goes home to help him take care of her mother and little sister. And she won't let me come."

He flung himself back in the chair. "What do I care what her family is like—I love her! I'm going to find her some weekend, too—follow her. I can't stand it much longer."

His violence startled me. My presence seemed completely forgotten. And his faith in her was appalling. This was Chicago. I'm misogynistic. However, it would not pay to attack the matter this way. A hint was insufficient—he was gone too far. Nothing short of a blow in the face would stop him now. And I was not yet sure such a blow was necessary. Certainly I was responsible for this affair—and an idealistic Ion must be handled delicately.

"At any rate, sir, you'll grant her loveliness?" I nodded. "And she knows everything, sir—read *The Frogs* to me yesterday in the original—and *Gil Blas* in Spanish—Molière—Dante—her mind is fascinating."

"Too much so, Noble—it strikes me she's really a bit too clever—too continental for you." Brutal of course, but I didn't want to see him fling himself away utterly, unless she was

worthy. He took it excellently.

"I guess she is, sir," he laughed, "too clever for me, but she inspires me. That last paper I wrote for you was done after an afternoon with her. She was talking Strindberg and Schopenhauer—you admitted I hit off Sue and Arabella well. Hardy's meant more to me ever since, sir."

I saw he was intellectually lost to her. But was that all the fascination?

"Do you think such a woman as that is really capable of permanent love, Noble?"

"Yes, sir," his eyes glowed; I turned quickly to the mockery of a fire and sat back to refill my pipe. I knew about what was coming.

"When she kissed me the first time—" He flushed, I felt like patting him on the back for his kiddishness. "Her lips quivered and clung so softly to mine—her whole body trembled—"

"Suppressed passion?" I suggested.

"No—NO!" He almost leaped from the chair. "I beg your pardon, sir, but it was not that. I know that. I've had a little of it." I smiled at what he might consider passion. "She truly loves, even as I do—for the first time."

I had a strange desire now to laugh—I am slightly misogynistic, but I knew what a cacophonous outburst would do to him at this stage, and refrained.

"Do you—want to—marry her, Noble?" I put in reluctantly, deliberately.

"Yes, sir, I do. And what's more, I'm going to."

"That's impossible." I flashed. "You're both my children, and I don't intend to let you."

He laughed, he had caught a telltale flicker of my eyes as I relit my pipe. "You're fooling, sir! I'm really very serious."

"But my dear idealistic Ion, a poet named Keats once remarked that 'Love in a hut with water and a crust,' etc., etc."

He laughed again. "Oh, we've settled that, sir. Clemanthé will go back and dance nights and I'll get a job. I can type well you know, or tutor."

"Don't you think you ought to be her—partner?" The question looked harmless, but I intended it to cut. I did not trust the girl—was she not too sophisticated for him, whether she loved him or not? He smiled at my insinuation.

"Oh I can trust her implicitly, sir. It isn't that I'm worried over. I'm afraid she'll get tired. She looks so tired when she comes back every Monday morning. She's not strong, you know—frail, slender, very girlish. And I think she once had a strenuous life."

I almost said Amen to that aloud. Meanwhile made a note of that Monday morning tiredness. Cursed myself again for cynicism. Had University drudgery utterly confounded me on all women? Or was I simply withering up—the Helicon of love and sympathy going dry and dusty?

His next remark was distressing. "We're going to be married next week, sir. We have our apartment already picked out."

Why should that girl rush into this so? They were but Juniors in the college, both of them. She certainly had a career, of a sort, in front of her if the vague echoes of her past meant anything. Why had she stopped it to come to an American University, when presumably she could have gone back to Europe where she would assuredly be more at home. I had always felt a curious distrust of her, though she was marvelously appealing in a rather childish way—deep black hair and eyes, with the most strangely pathetic appeal in them I've ever seen. There was poignant tragedy in the child's glance as she watched me give my perennially dry lectures, yet the glance could shift in a moment to the magnetic coldness of a serpent's. The Dead Sea apple and the Persian philosopher's lines on the creation of woman. Was this the

sort of girl for my idealistic young Ion? For the last month I'd been sorely troubled.

"Sir, you're dreaming again." I returned with a start. He laughed. "Your pipe's gone out. Now I know why they call them pipe dreams. I could almost see your dream in the dying smoke of your pipe. You think Clemanthé is not good enough for me."

"On the contrary, Noble, I think she's too good for you." He quivered. "I mean in the modern American slang. Academic as I am, I can't get away from that tendency. I think she's too subtle for you. There's something diabolically clever in all she does. She wouldn't throw away a career on a penniless youngster worth six of her in breeding and a dozen of her in sincerity. She's either gone crazy, or—"

"She loves me," he announced triumphantly, "as much as I love her, which—" he flung his arms wide in ecstasy—"is boundless. I have never loved like this. I never expect to again. She loves me the same way."

Against such irresistible confidence and youthful assurance I felt suddenly helpless, utterly speechless. I had been about to suggest that she might have been married once or twice, but that seemed now entirely too flippant. I resolved manfully and heroically to give up the battle—temporarily at least—but determined to make investigations, on my own account. Meanwhile—

"Noble, I congratulate you. You've found the *Summum Bonum* of life. Old Browning was right: 'Earth's returns—shut them in—Love is best!'"

He took my hand happily as we got up. "I'm glad you approve, sir. I've looked up to you ever since I came into your class last January. I hope I can always show myself worthy of your friendship and I'm very sorry if I bothered you tonight."

"Not at all, Noble." I was leading him to the door and glancing back at

the clock. I liked the boy, enjoyed talking to him, had begun to feel responsible for him—but a hundred examination papers take up a sad fraction of Eternity. As yet I had done nothing whatsoever this evening. So I confess I was reluctantly eager to send him away.

He left me radiant, wringing my hand. I stood a moment puffing at the closed door. Was she worthy of the boy? What was there about her I distrusted? And why had she ever reached out for Noble Trueblood?

A voice behind me startled me—a woman's voice. Whirling I faced the eyes of Clemanthé Tsolakas—she was just stepping in my ludicrous French window, off the fire-escape, and those dark eyes in her expressionless pale face were strangely glittering. She came in like a snake while I stood benumbed—coldly terrified at the insecurity of my position, yet fascinated by the girl's lithe movements in the dim light as she glided to my davenport near the chair where Noble Trueblood had just been sitting.

It was some moments before that numb fear slipped away enough to let me look at the girl sanely, and to discover she had on men's clothes; a dark suit, full tuxedo, with a cloak, and her hair cut like a boy's. So far I'd seen only those eyes that I knew too well from their months in front of me, just below my lecture desk. For a moment I started at the idea I must be in love with this child myself. Then that cold fear crept back—she was a woman, in a bachelor's apartment, and that bachelor happened to be a member of an academic—

"Oh don't worry, Doctor," she slid off her cloak, lit a cigarette languidly, blew exquisite rings into my make-believe fire-place, "no one saw me come in. I just followed Noble over here and waited outside for him to go. I'm

Don Giovanni himself this evening. If a spectre calls, I'll waft," she waved her hand slowly toward the window, "myself out the way I came. Out of the shadows—into the shadows. Who said that, Doctor? Come and talk to me." She motioned imperiously to a smoking stool near the davenport. Then she laughed, a rippling, tremulous laugh that made me quiver and go limp.

I moved over to her gingerly, settled down as she directed, and drew nervously on my briar—and again met those magnificent black eyes.

"You can't have Noble Trueblood, child, he's too good for you." I heard a football coach say once the best defence was a good offence, so I had begun accordingly.

She started. I saw I'd struck.

"He's an idealist, through and through. He's put you up on Helicon among the Muses. You have a past he knows nothing of—does not dream of."

Still no reply. She was gazing intently into my electric travesty of a fireplace, expressionless, tense.

"You've been in front of my desk for four months now, Clemanthé—pardon my informality, we're at war, you know—yet I understand you little better than I did that first day. You're my most brilliant student." I hesitated, then deliberately—"You'd make a remarkable continental adventuress, for you've sold your heart to—"

"Ugh—don't—!" She leaped up, wailing, eyes dilated—

"Stop—for God's sake be still!" I clapped my hand over her mouth, shivering as I listened.

But her cry had died almost as suddenly as it came, as if her heart had contracted and choked her throat. She slipped down sobbing pitifully on the davenport.

I was astounded, had no idea what to do. The danger of my position was disturbing enough in itself, without—then I breathed more easily as she

slowly raised herself and lay back languidly on the pillows, her deep black eyes swimming with tears.

"Mephistophèle—a Manichæan fiend—put those words into your mouth." I jumped. Her white young face was drawn in agony. I'd never realized she was so young before, and I'd hurt her. "I have sold my—no!" Her eyes flashed again. "I won't—I've given my heart—it's gone. I thought I didn't have one. I found it a month ago, now it's gone again. Noble has it. I've learned, even as Ingomar the Barbarian you taught us learned—"Two hearts that beat as one."

I watched her closely—she was such a glorious little actress I rather suspected her now. But I was wrong. Before I knew it she was on her knees at my feet—in tears.

"Doctor—oh, Dr. Barton, weren't you ever in love? Haven't you ever known one girl who loved you—lived for you—would die for you?" I was getting uncomfortable and puffed vigorously. She was abruptly transformed to a little girl, that curious mask of sophistication vanished like a wreath of attar, and even as she'd put on her mask so young, so was she the younger now that it was gone—a little, black-eyed child pleading pitifully to be consoled with. No, she was not acting—all her poise was utterly lost.

"I've loved Noble, Doctor, for over a month now, hopelessly, fearfully—I've never known such a feeling before. I'd die rather than hurt him. But I've got to hurt him." She burst into tears again, I found myself patting her head against my knees. "Oh, he's been so dear to me, now I've got to hurt him—it's going to put me on the rack, spin me out like silk. I love him, Doctor—I love him, I love him, I love him!" She had both my hands in hers and was clenching them fiercely. I was biting hard on my pipe, muttering silly stuff to console her. Never had I seen a woman so completely unnerved. What

The professor clapped his hand over Clemanthé's mouth. "Stop—for God's sake be still!" he implored.



was in that little black head that tortured so? I speculated rapidly.

"You're right, Doctor—I've sold—oh, I can't say it, but promise you won't ever tell him." She buried her face against my knees, looked up at me so pitifully I almost cracked the stem of

my briar. "Doctor," she whispered her little story, between sobs, deep wracking sobs that made me limp with pity, "Doctor, you won't tell him. Please don't tell him. I'll go away—leave school—and after I'm gone just tell him how much I—I loved him."

With a low cry she flung herself on the floor and I stood up and hurled my pipe into that mockery of a fireplace. Then I buried my old head in my arms against the mantel and thought—thought fiercely. It was the deepest thinking I'd ever done—far deeper than any academic acrostics, for I was face to face with a pitifully bare soul and the bareness of it was blinding. The fatalism of life had never impressed me as it did that moment, though I've lectured on it countless times, with perfect self-assurance.

There was no way out—the boy was too idealistic. But that such a contract as that child had told me of could exist in an American college staggered me. I had no idea a program of cruel self-sacrifice was going on literally beneath my feet, in front of my lecture desk. It is the children of this new generation who suffer, not we. Life is more complex today, we had no such complicated texture to unweave. From the depths of my old cynical heart I pitied the child lying there on the floor as I'd never pitied a fellow being before.

With all the strength I could summon, weak yet from her revelation, I lifted her gently to the davenport and sat down beside her, dabbed at her black eyes, patted her clear white young forehead.

Suddenly she lifted her head and gasped. I followed her glance and again got that horrible numbing fear. A man, a heavy thick-set individual in evening clothes, thick-jowled, smiling cynically, stood smoking a cigaret against my French windows. How under the sun had he—?

He sauntered over toward us, I heard the girl groan, her little hands turned cold in mine.

"Oh, don't be disturbed, Professor, I've just come to take my little girl home. They told me she'd come over to visit you—about her work." The last with a low chuckle.

I leaped for him blindly, Clemanthé

flung herself around my knees.

"Don't Doctor, oh don't—I'm not worth it." The man was eyeing us both coolly. Flicked his cigaret.

"Professor, you misunderstood me. I trust you implicitly with Clemanthé, but you're the only man I would trust with my little girl. I'd like to shake with you on it, Professor."

As he stepped closer to me, I noticed with surprise he was a splendid specimen of what I call, non-academically, the hard-boiled business man. His grip made me wince.

"Oh Jim!" She pushed between us, "I'm sorry—take me away, Jim—send me away—to Nice, the Riviera, or bury me in Seventh Avenue, the Bronx—I'll forget." She choked and the big man patted her little head. "Doctor Barton knows, Jim," she added with a shudder. "I'm sick of playing the game here, Jim. Send me away, take me with you—but please, oh please—don't hurt poor Noble!" She clung to the big man pleading.

He seemed suddenly to be undergoing a curious transformation in the dim light. Immersed as I was in the idea I had made a mistake in shaking hands with him—though he'd seized my hand first—I could sense something going on in the man. He looked down at Clemanthé, smiling half-tenderly.

"I had a little girl like you once, child. That's what made me fall for you first, I reckon."

She was still glancing up at him eagerly. He kissed her gently on the forehead. Then abruptly stepped over by my fireplace and looked down at that modern electric affair. Clemanthé seemed startled at his leaving her. I myself was completely puzzled as to my next move, and waited, academically—hence quite naturally.

In a moment or two he whirled—decisively.

"Professor, I've spent \$41,000 on this kid and her family. Her brother's N. G.—father dead—mother and little

sister dependent on her. She sold herself to support them now and get an education to take care of 'em later on—brave kid." I saw Clemanthé sink against the back of the davenport in something like a trance; he made a move to catch her, but she shook her head. "Now, Professor," he continued, flicking his cigaret into my fireplace, "you probably don't realize what a sacrifice some of your youngsters are making to hear you spout on—well, Greek roots—and Kant's philosophy—oh, I had some of your stuff once—and the Prof who flunked me out drove me into making about forty-eight million—Kant"—he chuckled, and I longed to heave my book ends at him—"but I've always known what an unusual kid Clemanthé is. In fact, since I had her trailed lately—you'll pardon my putting my men on you, Professor, I was merely afraid that kid might be here—" his jaw tightened a moment—"I've suspected it was time to transfer my little Clemanthé to some other life. Clemmie, come here."

She obeyed meekly and he put his huge paws on her little shoulders. I felt curiously hot all over but was helpless.

"Clemmie," he was eyeing her fiercely, "you've been straight with me till this—you've played square. Twice you gave up a boy I thought sure I'd have to put away—once in Paris, once in Leningrad. Oh, I've had you trailed always. Now I think the time has come to slip you a reward. What do you think I'm going to pull off for you?"

Her eyes were big with wonder. I listened intently.

"Professor," he whirled on me, "call up that boy and have him ankle over here. I heard all of her line on him." He turned and dropped his head on his arms on the mantel.

"Jim!" She cried, and sank speechless on the davenport.

"He won't take her," I muttered harshly.

"Call him over here," he bellowed at me. "Professor, you don't know a damn thing about love. Call that boy over here."

I picked up the telephone and gave the number.

For the three of us that wait for Noble was a death-watch—Blücher coming, Quatre Bras, Ney's stormy charge, the cannon rolling over the Old Guard at Waterloo. I kept my eyes glued on my hoplite andirons from my spot near the door—so the Greeks must have waited at Thermopylae. Clemanthé was stretched dazed on the davenport smoking fitfully, watching alternately that silly electric fire and big Jim, who leaned over the mantel with his back to us, cynically playing with my small wax models of Otway's Belvidera, Jaffair, and Pierre.

"What's this truck, Professor?" He eyed me contemptuously. "Some more stuff you use for your kindergarten?"

I puffed twice deliberately. "Yes, stuff of the greatest tragedy since Shakespeare. The younger man you hold there—please be more careful with him, I have to take him to kindergarten tomorrow—was something of an idealist, involved in a state intrigue. He came clear though."

"So'll your friend tonight." I jumped. "But who's the other bird, the—?"

"The girl," I interrupted sharply, "fought that man for the boy—he was the boy's best friend. She—"

"Won—she'll do it again tonight, Prof. You and I'll lose. Oh, here's our young friend now." He flung away his cigaret.

Noble's knock brought me out of a trance—a distinct feeling of depression that this man of the world had seen more of life in my play for tomorrow than I myself had found through my wax models. I opened the door rather slowly.

"I'm glad you sent for me, sir." He squeezed my hand eagerly. "I had a question I wanted to put to you, but was afraid I would—"

His eye fell on Clemanthé, he rushed to her, knelt beside her on the davenport. As yet he'd not seen the big man back in the shadows.

"Dearest, are you sick? Why are you here? Can't I do something for you?"

She swayed once or twice and fell sobbing into his arms. I turned away suddenly. The room was quiet except for her bitter weeping and his confused tender pleadings.

"Well, Clemmie, I'll leave you now then." The big man's voice stabbed the silence, he stepped out of the gloom. Noble started up as if shot, let Clemanthé slip back on the davenport where she choked wretchedly.

"Who are you, sir?" The boy's voice cut. I watched the two powerless to speak or move. Far back in my brain was ever that numb spot of fear—a scene—a scandal—in my apartment! But the moment was too tense for thought.

The two men faced each other silently, eye to eye—big Jim put out his hand.

"I'm her father, boy. I came to talk to the Professor about her. He tells me she—she loves you; well, take good care of her. I'll turn her over to you now, son."

Noble's expression relaxed quickly. "Oh, I beg pardon, sir. I—I was not told you were here. Thank you for—"

"He lies!" came a pulsing stab from the davenport. Both men started. I gasped and stepped forward.

"Now, gentlemen, let's take this calmly. Keep cool and—"

"Oh pipe down, Prof. I'll handle this. Go play with your wax models of men—not men." I could have throttled him on the spot.

Clemanthé was up clinging to Noble—she dashed away her tears.

"He's not my father, Noble—he—he's—" she buried her head on the boy's shoulder. I saw him shudder—his body instinctively shunned her touch for a moment. Then he put both arms around her, kissed her hair. I gasped once more. The big man smiled and nodded to me. He had such a splendidly large throat to grip and—

Noble suddenly dropped Clemanthé on the couch, stepped over to Jim, tapped him on the shoulder.

"I don't think we need you any more around here—you're something of a mucker"—the big jaw tensed, relaxed slowly—"but you've taken care of this little girl and you just now tried to protect her name. I thank you for that. However, she's through with you—"—again the big jaw clenched—"I'm going to take care of her now . . ."

The man Jim stood transfixed for a moment, then leaned over to pat Noble on the shoulder. The boy stepped back.

"Keep your hands off me, sir. You were not admitted to this room, I know. I suggest you leave the way you came in." He pointed to the French windows.

The other coolly lit another cigaret, took his top hat off the mantel.

"Boy," he grinned at Noble, "you've got guts. If you ever need help with her—money I mean—let me know. She loves you—that's more'n she did for me, though I guess—old and decrepit as I am—I loved her." He drew his hairy hand across his eyes and laughed forcedly. "Youth, Professor"—he waved his hat at me—"we haven't a chance these days. Come up to my office some day and we'll talk it over. Bring along your little playthings. We'll play kindergarten together and I'll teach you what you've forgotten all about—life!" He turned to look last at Clemanthé, who was watching him dazedly, smiled tenderly at her and walked rapidly out my French windows.

Noble relaxed wearily against the fireplace, dropped his head. Clemanthé

started to leap to him but fell back in pitiful dismay. I stepped over to him and patted his shoulder.

He looked up at me with blurred eyes. "Oh it's all right, sir. I feel better now. I'm sorry, sir, this all happened in your rooms. Can you forgive me?"

I crushed his hand and pointed to Clemanthé, face downward on the davenport. "Pardon me, sir"—he quickly knelt down by her. "Dearest, it's all right now—he's gone. Come, I'll take you home."

She glanced up fearfully, scanning his face with intense eagerness.

"Do—do you still want me, Noble?"

"Certainly, dear. I'm no better than you. Why should I question you? It's too old-fashioned. No man expects much of a woman these days."

I gasped. This my Ion—my idealist—

She sat up, looked at him narrowly, half laughing—

"Noble, you knew all about this, or you'd have killed Jim a few minutes ago."

"Surely, Clemanthé. I came back to ask my friend—the Professor"—he

bowed to me—"another question. I heard you talking. Then I heard that man—couldn't seem to drive myself away—I went home finally to fight it out. I suspected you might call for me. And I was ready when the time came."

He took her by the hand and whirled her into his arms, with a gay laugh. "We've both been naughty children—let's love now and be happy." This my Ion!

As they left me, he sent her ahead to the elevator, and turned to shake my hand, just inside the door.

"I hope, sir, I've not disgraced you. You taught me to support my friends, not let love lure me from them as Jaffair lost Pierre." His eyes gleamed tears. "I did not know about this, sir, when I came in—I—I was very shocked, but I've saved you trouble, sir—a scene. I hope you'll forgive me. I'll try to take good care of her." His voice choked.

We shook hands in the darkness of the doorway and I shut the door quickly—thanked God. He was still my Ion—and my Jaffair.

Ode To My Own—

By Arthur Lee Tracy

I HELD you close the whole night thru',
 You were so soft to feel;
 It all is still so very new,
 It scarcely seems quite real!
 In fond embrace I clasped you tight,
 Your presence gave me life;
 I held you close—afraid you might
 Turn cold, as is my wife!
 You eased my heart, relieved the pain;
 My Angel, you're divine.
 I'll call on you some night, again,
 Hot Water Bottle mine!

When You're A-broad!!

*Of course you'll go fishing — but there's a moral
to the picture —*



*The nicest fish in the sea are usually the
ones that are forbidden.*

I Hope So, Professor!

By Nard Jones

Marriage to your college prof may have its advantages but when the charming co-ed (now wife) begins to feel a lull, a snappy collegian can make her stray — how far?



WHEN Prynn Wells married Professor John Neems everyone in the college town of Paxton pretended to be mildly surprised, and it may have been that they actually were. Prynn wasn't exactly the sort of girl that you would pick to become enamoured of, and married to, a professor of English literature—even though he was handsome and had written (under a discreet pen name) two or three daring novels quite in the Gallic style. Prynn had been the gayest of the gay at the University. She had been one of the leaders of the crowd that each year was certain to have two or three bad tilts with the Board of Deans.

So, naturally, many were surprised. But not little Prynn. She had gone after Neems and she had known all along that she would get him. She had suddenly found herself about to graduate—after four years of playing—and was confronted with the prospect of working or going back home to help around the house. Neither, she felt, was career enough for a girl with her attributes. So when John Neems had come into Paxton and knocked all the co-eds flat and increased the enrollment in English Lit twenty-five per cent

Prynn knew that she had her work cut out for her.

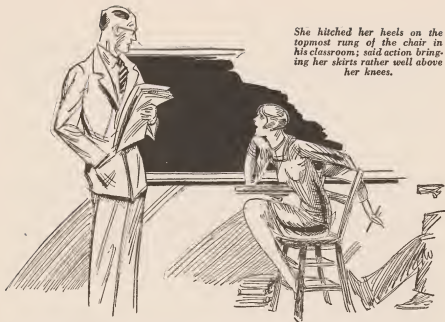
The first thing she did was to take a seat in the front row of his classroom and hitch her heels on the topmost rung of the chair. This brought her skirt rather well above her knees—and they were not, in any manner of speaking, mediocre knees. They would have made Ann Pennington admit that hers were not the two and only—not quite. The next day, relationships between student and faculty being what they were at Paxton, Professor Neems had asked her to have lunch with him at the College Inn. She did. And over the coffee and cigarettes he said:

"Yesterday you displayed your knees quite—nicely, Miss Wells. Am I to take that as—as—" he floundered a moment and became concerned over the end of his cigarette.

"As an invitation to become interested in me?" Prynn finished for him, being one of those modern girls that one is always reading about.

"Well. . . yes." He laughed. "You are frank. I like that. I'll be earnest. That makes a nice vaudeville team. Shall we sing or dance?"

"Dance," chose Prynn. So they did. And that was the beginning. In June Prynn graduated and up until that time they had been to five dances, three musicales, four dramas, two comedies,



She hitched her heels on the topmost rung of the chair in his classroom; said action bringing her skirts rather well above her knees.

sixteen motion pictures, nine parties (nice), four *parties*, and taken twenty-six walks in the moonlight and three when the moon wasn't lighted. That summer Neems stayed at his cottage to complete (so rumor ran) another of his risqué novels. Prynn wrote home that she would remain for a time in Paxton with a girl friend. She had, she said, some work to clean up before she came home.

In a month and a half she had "cleaned up her work" and was residing in a Spanish bungalow and was half-owner of a darling sport roadster with one of those funny seats in the rear. For Neems, being no ordinary professor, could afford these things—that was because of those blue-and-yellow-covered novels by "J. Mainwaring Eustace-Grant," or something like that.

The faculty women's club was duly perturbed over the marriage. They had hoped that young Professor Neems would marry one with more—ah—stability. But some of them opined that things might be fixed. A word dropped

here and there while Prynn was at one of the teas. What they really meant was that they hoped she could be made to wear black dresses just a trifle long and high shoes and read nothing stronger than Matthew Arnold and Jeffrey Farnol. They didn't know Prynn.

That summer she found herself delighted. Neems was a very engaging young man. He had a hobby—he was intensely interested in the study of esoteric and ancient symbols, symbols having more or less to do with sex and that—er—sort of thing, you know. Anyhow, he taught Prynn much more than any professor's wife has any right to know; and she wondered why professors couldn't be as interesting in the classroom instead of waiting until they married their pupils—pupil—anyhow that's about what she thought.

Neems was fun. Her days were a delight, and her nights were dreams of a poem about love. She thought suddenly and deliciously that she was rather happy, as happy as a girl like Prynn can ever be.

She never felt lonely until school opened again and Neems had to go back to the classroom. Of course, she still knew many of her old classmates in Paxton, and she knew most of the university except the new Freshmen. But when they found her a professor's wife they avoided her like a plague. They couldn't know she hadn't changed. Dannie Loop was most surprised of all. She and Dannie had been buddies at the "U"—almost engaged; at least as nearly so as Dannie ever got. Sleek, dark, handsome, and a football man when sober, he wasn't the kind that wears well too long. But he was fascinating for a dance, or a party, or a week-end at somebody's house. Prynn and Dannie had been a pair—you know how it is. He was surprised and hurt a little. But he didn't say anything.

Then Prynn with all the life about her and yet so far away from her, began to be the tiniest bit lonely. It wasn't that Neems didn't approve of parties and cocktails and silly things, but his position held him away from them. And her position, as his wife, kept her away, too. The closest she got to the students and their life would be when her husband would invite one or two of them to dinner Thursday. She liked that. Some of the girls would be so surprised to find her young and pretty and witty. Of course she liked *that*.

Then one day her husband invited Dannie. When Dannie came and sat at the table and talked to Prynn about the old days, John Neems was mildly surprised. But he said nothing. Dannie told about the time that Prynn went to the football dance at Warwick; about the time that she got up on the table at Ven's and missed the chandelier by a good three feet; about the time that—

Then Prynn dug a sharp little heel into Dannie's college brogues thereby steering the conversation into more shal-low channels.

Neems watched the two. He wasn't jealous. But they were such a charming

couple, so alike. He could understand their comradeship. A swift pain shot through him once as he heard them laugh together; it was as if Youth was going on ahead and taking something with it that rightfully was his. Finally, he broke into the talk:

"Next week-end I've got to go to Warwick. Confounded courtesy lecture on Poe. I'd take you with me, Prynn, but the accommodations are frightful—and those things bore you to death." Then Professor John Neems stifled a yawn.

Between the eyes of Prynn and Dannie there passed something more intangible than light. . .

That Saturday morning after Neems had gone to Warwick with a brief case, two shirts, a pair of pajamas, sox, and two collar buttons, Prynn heard the telephone ring. Dannie was at the other end of the wire.

"Prynn," he said, "how much do you love your husband?"

Now it makes no difference what *you* would have said. Prynn was what she was, and she was young and lonely, and life was a coin tossed in the air. Prynn was nineteen. She would never be again.

So she said, "That has nothing to do with it, Dannie. What have you?"

"A party at Valducci's; just four or five couples. Will you come? It will be dark as the night—and I'll bring you home whenever you say."

"I'll come. . . Ten o'clock?"

"I'll be there for you then. 'Bye. . ."

Maybe she was sorry after she had put up the receiver. Maybe she wasn't. That's no business of ours. Besides, Prynn always did what she said she'd do.

But several things happened. The Paxton police became cognizant of the illicit liquor at Tony Valducci's and they unceremoniously raided the place and put a nice big padlock on the front door. And they had unknowingly nipped Dannie's party in the bud. Dannie called

Prynn and there were tears in his voice. But Prynn was big hearted and she told Dannie that they might hold the party in her Spanish bungalow.

That night—or rather the next morning—the whole thing was going very well. It was one o'clock and things were just about where things are at one o'clock in Spanish bungalow parties. Then there was a knock at the door.

It was *not* Prynn's husband!

But it was Doctor Forrest Cranston, head of the Board of Deans. He had come to borrow the fourth volume of something or other.

Somehow she got the book, and all the while Doctor Cranston stood in the hallway. His ears heard a phonograph saying . . . *You got to know how to love 'em* . . . and his eyes saw a young man who evidently knew. His ears heard the tinkle of cocktail glasses, and his eyes saw Prynn and Dannie. Then he took the fourth volume and went home. From there on the party sagged—as one might expect it to.

In the course of time Professor Neems came home. Prynn wondered whether to tell him or not. He had been broadminded; but he'd have to be darned broadminded, she conceded, to let this get by.

On Tuesday evening he asked for his fourth volume of something or other, and Prynn said—shakily, too—"Doctor Cranston borrowed it."

"Well," replied Neems. "I've got to have it. Guess I'll run over." He kissed her. "I'll be right back."

Then Prynn sat very quietly in a chair, and waited. She was sure that old Cranny would squeal—or drop a hint.

When Neems came back Prynn couldn't discern anything wrong. His face was unperturbed. He lit a pipeful of tobacco, rattled some papers, opened that damned (the adjective was Prynn's) fourth volume, and proceeded

to work. After a while he looked straight into her eyes and said,

"Heard you had some of the boys and girls up while I was gone."

"Yes—er, that is—yes," said Prynn.

His eyes dropped again to his work. "That's nice. It pays. The students like to be friends with the faculty if the faculty'll let 'em. It makes a good feeling all around."

Prynn tried not to make her sigh too audible.

That night Professor John Neems rolled over on his other side and said, "If I were you, dear, I'd always have *couples* when I had those parties for the kids. If *one* comes unaccompanied, people—some people—might think it was odd."

The next day, in his class of English 24, a study of the American novel, Professor Neems addressed the class thusly:

"In 1890 there were a great many sentimental novels of honor. The heroes were forever vindicating a woman's honor. They did this by shooting the man who had wronged the woman. . ."

The Professor drew a long breath and looked over his tortoise rims at Dannie Loop. Dannie Loop looked out of the window, very much interested in a passing automobile.

"Those novels," Neems resumed, in his best lecture manner, "were a pile of rot. No man in his right mind will wreck his home, cause unhappiness to the woman he loves, and get himself hanged, just because there has been a 'wrong.' Such a man would be, if the ladies of the class will pardon me, a damned fool, unless there were other and more convincing facts to be taken into consideration."

Twenty-six pens and pencils scribbled in notebooks—but Dannie's hung limp in his fingers.

"Am I correct, Mr. Loop?" asked the professor.

"I hope so," answered Mr. Loop with admirable deference to a man of learning.

And Still More Spice



DO-DADS!

FIRST BEACH-COMBER: YOU SURE DO CONCEAL YOUR WHEREABOUTS WHEN YOU GO OUT.

SECOND BEACH-COMBER: NO, I DON'T; I LEAVE THEM AT HOME SO THE SISTERS CAN WEAR THEM.

—COLORADO DODO.

"ONCE A SAILOR—"

THE NEW PLAY WAS A FAILURE, ALTHOUGH THE CAST HAD GIVEN OF THEIR VERY BEST.

AFTER A LONG AND TEDIOUS FIRST ACT MANY PEOPLE LEFT THE THEATRE. PROMPTLY THE MANAGEMENT CLOSED ALL THE AISLES EXCEPT ONE; AT THIS THEY STATIONED AN ATTENDANT, AN EX-SAILOR.

AT THE END OF THE SECOND ACT A STREAM OF PEOPLE

RUSHED FOR THE ONLY EXIT. THE ATTENDANT WAITED THEIR COMING.

"WAIT!" HE COMMANDED IN A LUSTY VOICE. "WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST!"

* * *

DAUGHTER—"You know, dad, he always said he'd never marry until the right girl came along."

DAD—"Well, how does he know you are the right one?"

DAUGHTER—"Oh, I told him I was."



A judge suggests a tax on divorce.

Oh, the people we know who'd like to pay *that* tax!



A GIRL OF CHORUS—WHY IS A CHORUS GIRL LIKE A VERY SICK PERSON?

A GIRL OF COURSE—BECAUSE BOTH ARE BARELY LIVING.

SHE (at athletic meeting)—“Well, where’s your angry farmers?”

HE (baffled)—“Why—er—er—what angry farmers?”

“Didn’t you say we were coming to see the cross-country men?”

Voice (in the dark)—“Oh, Harold dear, why did you turn out the light?”

Bright Youth—“I wanted to see if my pipe was still lit.”



Youngest Sister-in-Law: “You don’t look nearly as tired as I should have thought.”

Bride: “Don’t I? Why did you think I should look tired?”

“Well, I heard mummy say you’d been running after Jimmy for months and months.”

FOR SALE—A folding bed by a lady that doubles up and locks like a piano.—*Newspaper Advertisement.*

Does Mr. Maskelyne know of her?

SWEET YOUNG THING—“Why are you running that steam-roller thing over that field?”

FARMER—“I’m going to grow mashed potatoes this year.”

Baby Face!

By Claudia Colonna

When the price of love is unhappiness, despair and suffering for those who seek it, one wonders is it worth it? Read how one girl found a solution.



JEROME BARCLAY at the age of forty-five found himself pretty much satiated with everything life offered. Being rich and a widower, he was regarded by widows, old maids, mothers with marriageable daughters, grandmothers even, as a big lion in the matrimonial zoo and all spread nets for his ensnaring. But marriage could give no new sensation to this hedonist.

One August, because he had been too lazy to go out of town, he spent sitting daily in his club gazing into the street, perspiring, drinking, and cursing generally his fate, when a fellow-clubman happened along and literally dragged him down to a house party at Great Neck, Long Island. Among the guests was a Mrs. Risdon, attractive widow of possibly thirty-six, with a tiny daughter the picture of grey-eyed innocence, appropriately named Angela. Her small face was pale and the grey eyes framed in long dark brown lashes had a thin sable line of eyebrow running above them like a word underscored to give it greater emphasis. The babyish nose provoked in one a desire to tweak it playfully, and the small mouth—a flaming red gash in her dead-white face—gave a peculiar effect of decadence

and virginity. This dove-like innocent flashed across the screen of Barclay's consciousness with the swiftness of a comet across a night-black sky, but the impression she produced was like an intaglio cut deep in the hard surface of his mind. He watched her with devouring eyes under crag-like brows, he invented excuses to touch her hand but he found an obstacle in the person of Mrs. Risdon who had taken in the situation at a glance. Her daughter she determined should not be "sacrificed" in this way, meaning she wanted the matrimonial prize for herself. Angela, she would make use of as a sort of runner up, the ultimate bagging of the game was hers.

Sitting at her toilet one afternoon with the dear Angela on a stool at her feet, Mrs. Risdon surveyed her own charming reflection in the expensive mirror of the guest room and asked, the while studying the effect of her words upon her well beloved child, "Sweet, how would you like the idea of Mr. Barclay for a—er—daddy?"

Angela's grey eyes were enigmatical as they rested on her mother's face. "Any father you give me, mother dear, I am sure I shall love."

The mother turned with impulsive gesture and took the elfin face between both hands. "Be nice to him, Angela, he told me last night his one sorrow is that he never had a daughter."



*"Hide me somewhere," she
whispered desperately, "any
place. The last thing I want
is to be found by my mother
—here!"*

Angela's silken lashes rested modestly on her virgin cheek as she replied in dutiful tone, "I'll do all I can, mother dear." But the look of triumphant satisfaction the white eyelids veiled, might have caused the lovely widow some wonderment could she have seen it. Imprinting a kiss on her daughter's chaste forehead, Mrs. Risdon

dismissed her with, "Now run away and dress for dinner. And Angela, wear the white and silver. It makes you look so innocent, as of course you are."

"Yes, mother."

Late that night Mrs. Risdon knocked

on her daughter's door. It was the habit for mother and daughter to indulge in what they called post-mortems of the day's happenings. Usually Angela had a score of little confidences but tonight she evidently preferred to listen for in reply to her mother's "Sweet, did anyone propose—anyone worth while I mean?" Angela gave her a reproachful look and answered, "There's only *one* desirable here as you know and I understood you had him preempted."

"Yes, of course," the mother laughed, "but I thought perhaps you might be 'practicing' on some of the young men. That Blythe boy'll be rich when his father dies."

"Am I to 'practice' till then?" There was a rasping note in the usually flute-like tones.

The mother rose from the softly cushioned chaise longue where she had dropped in graceful expectant attitude, "No sweet, don't bother with anyone you don't wish to, because I *think*," with a rising inflection on the verb, "I shall soon give you a daddy who will do everything for you." Strolling over to the side window that overlooked an ilex grove she peeped out from behind the curtains.

There was a smile of almost diabolical triumph in her lovely eyes as she turned and beckoned to her daughter. Between the rows of ilexes Jerome Barclay walked apparently deep in thought, hands thrust into the pockets of his evening trousers, head bent downward, eyes fixed on the ground—but in reality seeing nothing. To and fro he paced, to and fro, an unlighted cigar between his teeth upon which he chewed savagely. The lovely intriguante laughed gleefully. "Look Angela, I've given him something to think about."

Angela clapped her hands excitedly, "What is it mother. Do tell me what you did."

"Sh—h! not so loud! Come away from the window he might see us." Linking her arm with her daughter's

she led her back to the chaise-longue. There they sat facing one another. "You want to know what worries him?"

"Of course."

"Well," deliberately, enjoying in anticipation the effect she was to produce, "I told him that a clever woman can always marry any man she sets her mind on. And I looked him straight in the eyes when I said it. So now he's out there trying to think up some way to circumvent me."

"He'll run away," suggested the inexperienced Angela.

"Foolish child!" the mother answered, "what is to prevent me following him?" Angela could have reminded her mother that financial affairs might prevent, but it did seem a pity to spoil her moment of triumph. "Besides," continued the delicious schemer, "he won't go tonight and *after* tonight it'll be too late."

"How, too late?"

"Because, my dearest, I shall put him in a position where it will be apparent to everyone that he has compromised me and he'll have to do one of two things." She reached for her daughter's hand and patted it affectionately, "And of course, darling, mother prefers marriage. It's more respectable." She rose stretching her lithe body luxuriously, "Now go to sleep precious and when you open your pretty eyes in the morning I may have some great news for you." They kissed one another perfunctorily.

After her mother had gone Angela began to prepare for bed. The full length mirror reflecting her lovely self gave her pause. The light shining in back of her outlined her form clearly underneath the sheer georgette nightgown. She drew the folds about her and stood poised a small pink Venus rapturous in contemplation of her own charms. She knew she deserved much more from life than it had yet seen fit to give her. She was wearied of the constant strain to keep up appearances. Always her mother promised the great

deliverer in the person of a rich father, but the great deliverer never came. Born adventuress as she was, Edith Risdon had one obstacle in the way of success in this direction. She was burdened with a heart that simply would not behave. Thus it always happened when she was near the goal of success, along would come some impetuous, but handsome visionary, and she'd lose her heart long enough to put an end to whatever chances she had of annexing a bank roll. Angela had seen this happen time after time so her faith in her mother was about nil. And now that she had heard this newly-pro pounded dictum about the possibility of marrying whom one chose she began to speculate. And that other word her mother had employed, what was it? Ah yes—compromise. Smiling in satisfaction at her own thoughts, she allowed the enveloping pink film to slip off her shoulders, and stepped into the perfumed water in the marble tub.

Jerome Barclay tossed away a half-smoked cigar with an exclamation of annoyance, took out his watch and read the time in the light of the moon. It was near three o'clock. Well, he'd go to bed. In the morning, when he wasn't so disturbed he could think more clearly and then he'd decide what course to pursue. Damn it all he didn't want to marry. The worst of it was, he told himself, with a woman who comes out openly and declares herself, one couldn't tell just how far she would go. Ahem! Cute little trick the daughter though—Oh Hell, he'd go to bed. Into the darkened house he went feeling his way cautiously, almost as if he expected to be waylaid enroute and borne off an unwilling bridegroom, by the determined widow.

He entered his room, switched on the lights and then stood transfixed by what he saw. There in his bed, deep in sleep apparently, lay the lovely Angela. His surprise robbed him of speech and prevented his amatory thoughts from

functioning—at first. With stealthy footsteps he advanced to the bedside and stood looking down upon the beautiful sleeper. How had she come there? And why had she come? Instantly he associated her presence with some scheme of her mother. Of course that was it. In a few minutes a knock would come upon his door and a voice asking if he had seen the girl, demanding to be allowed to enter, then accusing him of all sorts of things and raising such a hue and cry the whole house party would be down upon him. No matter how innocent he was, there would be those who could remember certain actions of his, looks, that would militate against him. He felt himself let in for something all right. And to think that this innocent-looking child would lend herself to such a blackmailing scheme filled him with disgust.

He leaned over the bed and grabbing the girl's shoulder, shook her forcibly. She opened her eyes and stared at him uncomprehendingly and sat up in bed with an exclamation of dismay.

"What are you doing here," she demanded, gathering the bedclothes high about her neck and holding them tightly.

Barclay smiled at her. "I might ask you the same question since this is my room."

"Your room—?" She cast a swift glance about her and uttered a startled "Oh!" then she looked him full in the eye with a gaze that was clear and direct. "How did I get here. Did you bring me?"

"However delightful it is to find such a charming bed—er—nocturnal visitor, I assure you I did not bring you here. I have but this moment come in the room."

The girl sat hunched up with elbows on knees, her face thoughtful. "Then *that's* it!" she said at last.

"Your mother," Barclay suggested quickly, "you mean she's had a hand in your being here?"

"Oh no!" surprised.

"Look here Angela, I don't blame you. I happen to know your mother has set her mind upon marrying me. She'd do anything to gain her own ends even to putting you in this position and then accuse me of dire misconduct hoping to force me to do whatever she wished. Did she give you anything to drink——"

"Oh no!" The outcome had been entirely different than Angela had anticipated earlier in the evening but opportunist as she was, she decided to swim with the current. "Mother might do a good deal——" she said in a regretful shamed voice.

At this juncture a light knock sounded on Barclay's door. He glanced at Angela with a look which said quite plainly, "I told you so." But Angela caught at his sleeve. "Hide me somewhere," she whispered desperately. The last thing she desired was to be found by her mother.

"Hide you?"

"Yes, don't you see if it's mother and she has done this, it will be a good joke on her to come and find me—not here."

Barclay's eyes sparkled. "You clever little trick!" he complimented. Wrapping her in a dressing gown, he lifted her to her feet, quickly smoothed the bed, then looked about considering the safest hiding place. Seeing the partly raised window, he picked up the girl and bolted through it. "Oh," said Angela innocently, "why look that's my window there." She pointed to an open window, the next one up the balcony. Barclay made a dash for it.

Meanwhile the knocking on Jerome's door continued. Impatient that she might arouse the household, Mrs. Risdon tried the door. It was unlocked. She entered cautiously and seeing no one made a search of clothes press, bathroom and dressing room, but the object of her quest was not to be found. He was probably still walking in the garden. Smiling in wicked satisfaction of the surprise in store for him when

he should come, she threw off the negligee she wore over an alluring nightgown of pale yellow georgette, took one satisfied glance at herself, switched off the lights and got into bed. As a preliminary to her carefully thought out plans, she had left a note pinned on the pillow of her own bed which read:

Angela, sweet:

If I am not here when you come to look for me in the morning, you'll know something dreadful has happened. Alarm the household immediately and have a search made. Mother.

The sun was shining brightly under the partly drawn shade of Barclay's room when Edith Risdon awoke the following morning. She sat up with a start. The place in the bed beside her was unrumpled. The room was in exactly the same order as when she entered it last night. Barclay had not returned—or, and the thought filled her with mortification and rage—he had come, found her there and gone away. He might escape this time—but wait! Suddenly she remembered the note she had left for Angela. She must not get hold of it. But suppose she had and the search was on. In a moment they might come knocking at the door and a nice fool she'd look.

She sprang out of bed, threw the negligee about her and ran for the door. Just as she was about to open it she heard someone coming up the hall. She waited until they should pass. After a bit she tried again but returning footsteps stopped her. She looked about her frantically and saw the open window. But no! there was the wretched gardener assiduously watering the lawn directly in line of vision. Back to the door she flew and listened with ears that fairly stood out from her head in their eagerness to catch the slightest sound. Silence! Cautiously she opened the door. No one was in sight. But who could tell when one of those doors would open like an inquiring eye. Noiselessly she fled up the hall

gained her own door and entered. One quick glance at the pillow and she breathed again. The incriminating note was still there. She grabbed it with trembling hands, tore it in bits and then calmly sat down at her toilette table, powdered her too flushed face, arranged her hair, flung on a Chinese robe, the erstwhile property of a mandarin who had once admired her, and stepped across the hall and knocked upon her daughter's door.

Evidently Angela was sleeping more soundly than usual this morning since she did not respond immediately to her mother's knock. Perhaps she'd better let her sleep. She was turning away when an inner sense of uneasiness caused her to try the door. It opened

on an empty but disordered room; slippers, hose, articles of wearing apparel were lying about. The white square of an envelope bearing in Angela's large scrawly hand the word "Mother" was pinned on one pillow. Mrs. Risdon seeing it leaped over the sartorial barriers, grabbed it with shaking hands, and tearing it open read:

Mumsy:

Jerome and I have just gone to town to be married. It's all in the family. Angela.

"The little cat!" Mrs. Risdon said spitefully, evidently addressing her remark to the two pillows which still bore the imprints of the two heads which had rested there.



FIRST HOURI: "ELLA ATTRACTS THE MEN, DOESN'T SHE?"

SECOND HOURI: "YES, HER FATHER IS A STEEL MAGNATE."

A Girl Ain't Safe!

Della Foy, popular screen-star, woke up one morning with a terrible hang-over and decided the great outdoors would be her only cure —



Some Like 'Em Cold

By Eva Navone

Does a woman dare demonstrate her true love for the man she is to marry, or must she remain coolly indifferent to his passionate protestations until the knot is tied?



HE nip of middle age and of autumn are alike—they make a man relish a warm house. Chester Moad, pink-cheeked and with a growing abdomen, was reminded in his

walks along the tree-lined boulevard that summer had gone. He could not recall that the ripening tints of autumn had ever before made him melancholy. Chester made up his mind to marry.

His friend, Gerald Hanscom, as much a man-about-town as Chester himself, took a bantering interest in his changed attitude toward domesticity. Sometimes Gerald pulled a distinguished looking goatee and cast thoughtful glances upon Chester. And at Mrs. Deauville's dance he ventured to question him regarding the requirements he was looking for in a wife. He was told that the lady must be above reproach.

"To a man of my experience there are certain indications," Chester explained. "Any bit of seaweed will show which way the water flows." Chester had never held nearer acquaintance with the sea than a safe deck or a bathing-suit on a sunny beach, but he had a habit of coloring his remarks with references to the deep. Any man might swear, or use commonplace comparisons, but Chester had trained himself to his own chosen vocabulary, believing that it gave a tang to his remarks.

Gerald smiled. "I once read of a man who was looking for a bride he couldn't kiss until after the ceremony."

Chester scowled in surprise.

"Oh, not you. That was years ago. To the best of my recollection the gentleman didn't succeed."

Chester gestured in generous negligence. "I've met an eligible young woman, as chaste as an iceberg."

Gerald's intent expression gave evidence of interest, but he was glancing in another direction as he asked: "That statuesque Scandinavian girl, Miss Sunde?"

"Scandinavian by descent merely. A handsome creature, and as wonderfully trained in domestic affairs as her grandmothers."

"You must invite me to dinner—when this prize is your own," remarked Gerald, smiling up at the ornate ceiling.

Chester swelled out his chest. "I don't know about dragging an octopus in."

"Oh, come!" said Gerald. "Honor among thieves, you know."

When later Gerald made his way to Loraine Sunde, Chester was irritated. Loraine was faultless. Nothing hurried or out of place; nothing that was not cool, glossy and finished. He didn't like to see her taking so much pleasure in dancing with Gerald Hanscom.

"I didn't know you two had met," Chester said, not too pleasantly, at his first opportunity to join them.

"Oh, I know Mr. Hanscom," readily replied Loraine. "He dances like a god."

That remark was bitter to Chester. He still danced, rather well as he thought; but there was no denying that in the last few years he was disposed to fat. With him it was a matter of secret rancor that Gerald still kept his slenderness and his dark hair, touched up occasionally no doubt by a judicious barber. Chester had scorned artificial aids. He was somewhat stiff about wanting people to accept him as he was, and they usually had. Besides, Chester was too short for dancing gracefully with Loraine, whereas his friend made her a wonderful partner.

After a time Loraine and Gerald contrived to separate themselves from him again. Chester was puzzled, almost uneasy; he began to suffer a plain and plebeian jealousy. He had always despised that common manifestation of those who have slight experience in the art of wooing. Gerald might have kept his hands off.

That very evening when Chester and Loraine had driven over for the dance he had declared to her that he could love her to death. Though they were engaged he had never yet been able to kiss her, and he was constantly tormented by the desire to try her to the utmost. He wanted to kiss her, and yet he wanted more to have her refuse. That night he had made his most effective declarations, but she had merely replied that he need not hold her hand in order to make pretty speeches. He had not been displeased when she had buried her hands in her white furs. To make love to that dear iceberg was not easy; but her reserve was of the kind that drove him to an unexpected and delicious frenzy. Always when he entered her presence, particularly if she was at home and surrounded by those comforts he longed to possess, a warmth clustered about his heart, as roses about a sunny wall.

He set out to find her and Gerald. They were sitting before a snug fire in the Deauville library and talking earnestly.

Looking as darkly dignified as it was possible for a man of his round-faced type to appear, Chester strode in upon them, so far as it was possible for his chubby legs to stride. When he rounded the protecting angle of the Chesterfield he saw Loraine drop Gerald's hand! If she would hold a man's hand, what else would she do?

"What in the briny deep does this mean?" Chester thundered, as well as his unused tenor voice could thunder.

"I beg your pardon," gasped Gerald, and rose.

"Loraine, you're beyond my understanding!" cried Chester.

She was white rather than rosy. "I intend to be," she said, and patted a cold-looking silver slipper against the hearth. "Is there any interest for a man in a woman he's sure of?"

"Nonsense! An ultra-modern pose doesn't suit you."

"No, Loraine," Gerald put in, mocking and friendly. "The ancient Norse for you. Wifely submission, and all that."

"I'm not posing as either," said Loraine, a frown gathering on her smooth brow. "And I never explain myself."

"It's my right," Chester insisted, white with jealous rage. "I don't want my promised wife spending secluded hours with other men."

Loraine still sat in splendid repose.

"What reason was there—for you to so far forget yourself—?"

"As to hold his hand?" she asked, smoothly, unruffled and unhurried. "Oh, you see, I'm not going to marry *him*!" There was challenge in her attitude, a sort of honesty of self-defense. At least she had a northern directness, a reliance on the bracing clearness of herself. "You shouldn't see what's not meant for you to see," she added.

Chester sputtered, almost choked. "Our engagement—"

"Is at an end if you wish." Under her straight brows she smiled up at him, almost insolently indifferent.

"You've been playing with me!" Chester cried, fury rising in him.

"Oh, no. I meant to marry you if—" She raised her eyes, this time with a slanting archness.

"In the name of all the flying fishes, if what?"

"Oh, if I continued to like you as well as I have, and if you gave me a little freedom."

Solely because he was unable to stand, Chester Moad sank into the seat that Gerald had quitted. "Suffering cat-fish!" he cried.

Loraine reached out a cool white hand, chastely jeweled, and rested it on his knee. "A narrow outlook on life—I couldn't endure that."

As soon as might be, Chester dragged himself up from the depths of the sofa, very much as if he were pulling himself out of a tangle of kelp on the ocean's

floor. In sad need of friendly support he grasped Gerald's arm. "Let's get out of here!" he groaned.

But Loraine also rose. They realized that they had been justified in thinking her regal, for now they saw that she would have done very well for any queenly part. "Wasn't I good enough for you? What do you think I've been doing all these years? Sitting at home, waiting your royal convenience one day to come walking by? Mightn't I have had friends?"

"Of course, Loraine," said Gerald, his hand on Chester's arm, but looking at her with admiring eyes. "He'll think better of it."

But she continued: "Shouldn't I have made you a good home? That's what you wanted, wasn't it? All I'd have asked would have been a little generosity. And I'd have left you freer than I'd have asked to be. You poor—you poor fish!"

"I'll escort this pierced porpoise to the air," said Gerald, although Chester glared at him. "Wait for me here."



*Chester sputtered, almost choked.
"Our engagement — is at an end!"
If she would hold another man's hand,
what else would she do?*

He slapped Chester on the back, and they floundered out into the garden. A rain that afternoon had left a fragrant clean-washed landscape for the moon to grace, but Chester was not cooled by the fresh peace of the grounds. "Why didn't you tell me?" he demanded, his spleen having overcome his desire for sympathy.

"Honor among thieves," quoted Gerald, shrugging, and plucked a tea rose for his buttonhole.

Chester slashed about among the dewy plants. "That's it. Why weren't you square with me?"

"And not with her?"

Before the awfulness of that suggestion Chester staggered back into a rhododendron. "This is too much! . . . Why do you suppose she wanted to marry me?"

"Perhaps she thought it was time. Indeed, when you so nobly burst in upon us she was telling me how happy she was in the thought of marrying you. Most women are pretty steady, once they have a safe anchorage. Not every squall can blow them out to sea, as you would remark yourself if you weren't upset. She really likes you, old top. Better reconsider."

"Not this side of a hundred devil fishes! What's the use of a girl one can't kiss, if she kisses every other man?"

Even in the moonlight a change of expression could be discerned on Gerald's face. "But don't you see she can't be so very bad? If she understands our sort so little as to think we'd be generous——"

Nothing could satisfy Chester Moad. "You mean, then, to insinuate that her affairs have been few—perhaps confined to yourself?" Looking like a small bloodless fury he faced the taller man.

"I insinuate nothing!" Gerald himself began to burn with anger.

"But you intended to let me go ahead blindly!"

"My first duty was to her!" flared

Gerald, and the next instant shut his teeth down hard on his lip and blankly gazed at the moon.

"Oh, it was!" Chester almost danced about him. "There must be a reason! A very good reason!"

"What business is it of yours? You've cast her off." Gerald's words came still more hotly, and through the music-filled air his dark eyes glowed as fireflies.

"But on your account, remember!"

At that Gerald did an almost petulant thing. He slapped Chester's round insolent face—and loosed the other's primitive and long-inhibited instincts. He struck out at Gerald in earnest, and there followed a vicious fight, somewhat weak-muscle and ridiculous on the part of the smaller man. At the end of it Chester lay on the gravelled walk and scowled up vacantly at the vault of the world. As his undignified panting showed him not to be injured seriously, Gerald stood up, straightened his collar and hair and returned to the house.

Loraine Sunde was waiting where he had left her. She had sat down again, and was very intent on the leaping of the flames in the grate. When she saw Gerald's still flushed and partly dishevelled appearance she anxiously asked, "What has happened? There has been a—a quarrel?"

Gerald signified a careless affirmative.

Loraine was pale. "But why should there have been?"

"Oh, his remarks were insulting, and I laid him out beneath a bonny rose-bush."

"He's not hurt?"

"No," answered Gerald, coming over to the sofa. "Would it make much difference to you if he was?"

"Oh, I suppose it would. . . . It's rather nice to know that you defended me." She looked briefly and softly at him.

"You knew I would."

"And you didn't think it your duty to

tell him—all you knew? Gerald, you've known the worst of me, and you've still liked me and been loyal. If I could make you believe that you're the only one who does know, would you—would you marry me?" She let her hand lightly touch his sleeve.

"My dear girl——"

A hurt look came into her deep blue eyes and she withdrew her hand. "I see."

"You don't understand," he said, and held her wavering eyes by the unexpected earnestness of his own. "You see, I've never wanted to be domesticated. I'll never be anything but a rover, Loraine. Maybe when I'm sixty I'll appreciate a cushion before a fire, but not yet. It isn't anything against you, my dear."

She laughed. "Do you know, I've a secret to tell you. Chester thought I loved home-making, and I let him. But I don't. I'm a domestic expert because my mother made me learn. But I'd gladly kick my kettles into the gutter if——"

"Yes?" prompted Gerald, his interest fanned.

"If a man such as you could love me. Think of the fun we'd have—not getting in each other's way! And there'd always be someone who cared and understood." Her eyes were not fully open; it was as if she must find her way not by seeing but by careful feeling. He could detect the flutter of her heart, though she kept her hands and face calm.

"Did you expect that of Chester?"

"I see my mistake now. You don't understand what a mother I have. I'm

dying of her discipline. I'm twenty-six, but that's all the good it does me. She'd give her life for me, but she insists daily that I be a good housekeeper and settle down. If only I never had to hear the word 'settle' again!"

"Of course I'm fond of you." Gerald locked his unsteady hands about his knees. "But—— don't you see what the trouble is? I love you so much that I'm afraid I'll lose my interest in everyone else!"

Her breath taken away, Loraine sat up, her eyes starry. "And you were going to let me marry Chester Moad!"

"I didn't know till to-night. But the thought of his having you—— I'm glad I knocked the little popinjay down!"

"I'll let you be as free as you wish," she said in a quivering voice. "You see, I'm crazy enough about you for that." She looked down at her long hands, which were busy with the soft blue folds of her skirt. "I hadn't any hope of getting you after——after my indiscretion. I thought I'd marry Chester and forget. Who knows what I might have done otherwise?"

"Look here," cried Gerald, seizing her hands, "If you're so much in love with me, can't you let other men alone?"

She strangled a laugh, and a triumphant gleam came from beneath her drooping eyelids. "Of course, you goose!"

"If you'll be straight with me, I'll be straight with you. I couldn't help myself. It's you I've been wanting for months and months!"

"That's what I've been longing for you to say!" said Loraine, and kissed him.



Hot and Not So Hot

The good-looking Italian proprietor of a certain very fashionable and expensive Park Avenue beauty parlour has an ensnaring habit of looking into a customer's face while, with eyes glowing so that the jaded Society woman usually thinks his remarks bespeak a helpless captivation, he jabbers away in Italian.

But those who understand the language find, more often than not, that this is what he says:—

"My goodness! Nothing on earth could help a face like this! Juanita, bring me the axe!"

CUSTOMER—"My wife has very sore feet. What would you suggest?"

ASSISTANT (politely)—"Well, rubber heels."

"What with?"

GUEST—"May I introduce my friend, Mr. Jones, who has just returned from a holiday in the Canary Islands?"

HOSTESS—"So pleased to see you, Mr. Jones. I do hope you'll give us a song."



PUN

SEA—Oh darling! Why did you ever fall for me?

SHORE—I guess your line was just low enough to trip on!
—Log.

"Can you lend me a tener for a month, old boy?"

"What does a month-old-boy want with money?"

Maud: "Have you spoken to father?"

Billy: "Yes. I asked him by telephone, and he said: 'I don't know who you are, but it's all right.'"

A WELL-TO-DO housekeeper in need of the services of a plumber telegraphed a nearby establishment for a competent man. Answering the door-bell a little later, she found a man on the step.

"Good morning, ma'am!" he said.

"Good morning! Are you the plumber from Farley's?"

"I am that, ma'am!"

"Now," she said, "I want you to be very careful in your work, as the floors are highly polished."

"Sure now," he answered, with a slow smile, "there's no need to worry about me; I won't slip, ma'am. I've got hob-nails in me shoes."



IT WAS EVER SO

SHE—"Marriage is a pottery."

HE—"You mean lottery, dear?"

"No; I mean a pottery—a place for making family jars."

✻ ✻ ✻

**"CONGRATULATE ME!
I'VE JUST THOUGHT OF
SOMETHING CLEVER."**

**"BEGINNER'S LUCK, OLD
CHAP."**

**"IS YOUR FIANCE POPULAR
WITH YOUR PEOPLE?"**

**"RATHER! DAD COMES
DOWN SPECIALLY EVERY
NIGHT ABOUT TWELVE TO
SEE HIM OFF!"**



Doris—"My dears, you should have seen her face."

Chorus:—"Why?"

"Oh! It was funny enough to make a cat laugh. I can tell you I laughed till I nearly cried."

Love—and a Dream



As a moon-beam steals through the thick, black night,
Naked, voluptuous, free,
So, in my dreams, like a soft, warm light,
You came, my darling, to me.

You came with a kiss on your wet red lips —
Your sweet wet lips of red —
With your warm caressing finger-tips,
You came to my lonely bed.

With lips half open, as seeking love,
You came like a whispered word,
You came to my arms like a homing dove,
Like a wanderer back to the herd.

So softly you came as I waited there,
That from sleep I never awoke.
I could only feel your long, soft hair,
And hear the words that you spoke.

Oh! would that life were ever a dream,
With you by my side alway:
That things were not what they oft times seem;
That love did not die in a day.

—Everett Eddy Lyles

Whom the Gods Destroy--

By Louis Arthur Cunningham

Carma asked herself whether it was right to take love where she found it—and then struggled valiantly to still the passionate longings of her heart.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR:

Engaged to Myron Palmerston for two years, Carma comes to Calcutta to marry him. Barely have the words been said which make them man and wife, when a native woman—gross, sensual, coarse, cheap—stops them in the street and tells Carma that Myron has loved her too—the night before. Sick with disgust, Carma tells Myron she will stay with him a year until he recovers from the illness brought on by his excesses—but that they must live together as brother and sister. When Myron pleads he was ruined by the easy morality of the exotic country, Carma is adamant. Time passes, and a young journalist, Arnold Deering, visits Schuler, a neighboring tea-grower. Carma is aroused by Deering's manhood but fights against her emotion. One evening her husband and Schuler take a stroll—Deering and Carma are left alone.



HE knew what was coming before his arms encircled her. It seemed that there were two Carmas then; one that stood aloof and frightenedly said no, an-

other that yielded herself and snuggled close to Deering, meeting his kiss with one as wanton, twining white arms about his neck, seeking to annihilate

himself in his love. The second Carma was she whom Deering kissed, from whom he extracted a fervent avowal and a reckless promise.

Their embrace was long, but in her was passion wild enough to have made it last forever. Even as he released her, breathing like a wild thing, from his arms, Myron and Schuler came up the path.

"... part of the East, my dear Schuler," Myron was saying. "It gets into one and saps one's morale. We do things that in our country would revolt us; here they seem matter-of-course. But even here a good woman can pull a man up. I do not think it hits a woman like it does a man."

But Carma knew he was wrong, even if the pulse that drummed tomtom beats at her temples, the pressure of Deering's shoulder against her breast as he reached for a cigarette, had not given Myron the lie.

Four hours later, when Schuler had gone and Myron, unsuspecting and tired after a long day of riding about his fields, was dreaming the fairest dreams of Carma, the lovers were walking towards a ruined temple in a grove not far from the bungalow.

A great vermillion moon floated idly in the blue above the giant arches of the old building. Its stones were intersticed with moss and strange shadows lurked within its dusty, debris-strewn interior.

There beneath a huge idol they stopped and for a moment Deering bent and looked into her eyes. Her lips were parted, moist; her breath, hot, fragrant as the lotus, fanned his cheek and lifted his passion to a flame . . . Love, love to its full, love to ruin, to death; though the aged walls should crack and sway and tumble in upon them, though lizards crawled slimily along the smooth white stones.

Clasped tight in his arms once for a feeble second Carma fought the haze from her eyes, strove to shake off the sweet drug that enthralled her . . .

"Here . . . No, not here! In the temple . . . It seems unholy!"

"Love, unholy!" His lips smothered her words and her doubting.

At a late breakfast next morning Myron commented on the splendid sleep he had enjoyed and smiled at Carma, of whom he had dreamed. Deering



"Here . . . No, not here! In the temple . . . It seems unholy!" "Love, unholy!" His lips smothered her words and her doubting.



reminded them that he must be off at noon. He was going south to take a boat for Java. The two men conversed cheerfully, Myron happy because he would now have her to himself, Arnold

Deering because . . . the moonlight had rested soft on the flag-stones of the temple and a woman's lips were warm and willing.

Carma stirred her coffee, not listen-

ing to them, hearing Myron's words of the night previous. "We do things that in our own country would revolt us; here they seem matter-of-course."

In the door a plump woman in a flamboyant dress, her cheeks heavily rouged, stood for a moment looking at Carma with insolent eye, then walked away into nothing with a ludicrous wobbling of over-ample hips.

Carma did not smile.

Deering was gone. Carma, standing forlornly beside Myron on the steps of the verandah, waved him a disconsolate farewell and cowered away from her husband with a sudden twinge of shame as his hand gripped her arm. A feeling of loneliness, desolate and fearful, swept over her. She had been strong with the strength of innocence. In the space of a single night filled with madness her armor had been hewn from her. Like the mother of Man she felt the accusing eye of God and began to build about herself a defence of lies. No longer could she hold a spiritual ascendancy over her husband. Her sin was more terrible than his. He had been free of her when he dipped into the lees of life. She had not been free. Before God she was an adulteress, she who had laughed at and scorned the woman in scarlet silk. And Arnold . . . Lightly laughing he turned to look over his shoulder and lifted a long arm to wave once . . . farewell.

"Carma."

She was glad that Myron spoke and cut the meshes that seemed to tighten stranglers' cords about her heart. She turned to him with a smile that was meaningless. She wondered if his eyes saw . . . She felt subservient to him; her look wavered, lowered before his. With unspeakable relief she heard him address her with the reverence, the timidity that her position of virtue and

the knowledge of his own insufficiency had instilled.

"It is good to be alone with you again, Carma. Come."

They went into the living-room, quiet, flooded with the sunlight of early afternoon. Carma sat on the wide davenport, thinking now and wishing that Myron would take his place beside her, needing him, forgetting that out of deference to her own expressed will he would stay aloof.

He stood above her, holding out a silver case. Mechanically she took a cigarette and lighted it at the match he struck for her. He drew a chair close and settled down into it till his eyes were below the level of hers. Obviously contented, he studied her face and the sun-tinted fairness of her hair. With fluttering alarm she realized that he looked at her passively, that he did not see her beauty so as to desire it.

Her nonchalance was a lie. She feared. She wanted him to worship her and love her even to the commonplace manifestation of holding her hand, touching her face with his fingers, toying with her. Her femininity was dominant; beneath it a feeling of sheer dependence and helplessness. She was a woman, made for man's pleasure. Why did not Myron . . . ?

They were silent, both thinking widely different thoughts. Myron was first to utter his. She could never have spoken hers.

"You are good to me, Carma. You were kind when you punished me. But the sacrifice you made when you came with a man who had proved himself rotten has fructified. I have conquered myself!"

He said it with latent fierceness that told of gruelling conflict in the subjugation of his flesh. He looked to her timid eyes like a man of strength girt with a band of steel through which passion's darts might not pierce. His thin face seemed stern, more deeply lined about

the mouth, more earnest about the eyes. This was the Myron she had made, a Christian Frankenstein who terrified her and impelled her to draw the folds of her dress closer about her as if to hide her guilt. Where was the desire he had felt for her, that had driven him to attempt a conquest of her by force? Why did he not now come and crush her in his arms? She bowed before his strength.

"To this extent," he continued with a hint of boastfulness, with the cold assurance of a lust-purged monk, "I have strengthened myself: I can look upon you in all your loveliness as dispassionately almost as John the Baptist looked upon the soft white limbs of Salome who sought to seduce him."

Myron talked like a fanatic puritan, feeling an actual thrill in his power of repression, thinking that she must admire the effect that she had helped to bring about. But he seemed unreal to her; as if he were become a monstrosity of flesh without blood.

Perhaps it was just as well they should live apart. But she could not endure the homage of his eyes. She was a false deity, whom he adored, because she was his wife yet stain was not in her. Stain . . . there was a stain. She had readily surrendered to a stranger that which by force and declared virtue she had kept from Myron who had a right to it. To live with him and act out the lie, to pretend that she was still the superior Carma, unconquered by man . . . that must be her course. Well, he had lied to her and only that she had found him out the deception would have gone on. If he should discover her transgression. . . . She smiled, forgetting his presence. What could he discover of that night in the ancient quiet of the temple at the feet of the idol? Still, for his sake she must pretend; his own integrity was built around his conception of her. She tried to understand the su-

preme, impossible idealism of the man, an idealism that can seem practicable only to those who have once greatly sinned or to those who know not sin. It was a noble, godlike thing for a man and a woman, young and filled with normal appetite for each other, to live like brother and sister in continence. That, she ruefully recalled, had been her own plan. She had never until that night compromised with the forbidden. Now she could not share Myron's monastic idea. She must love again and again . . . with Arnold, with Myron . . . What was she becoming! What fury raged in her! Impatiently she flung the half-burned cigarette into an unused fireplace. It fell among some bits of straw and paper that flamed up vigorously and moved Myron to tell her that the cold season was not yet come. One spark had done that.

"You are lovely, Carma." Myron said it like a line from the Virgin's litany. She laughed and stretched her arms wearily. What use her loveliness? She thought of trying to tempt him to her. She craved adoration. Her head tilted back to disclose the columned whiteness of her neck, the deep parting between her snowy breasts revealed by the lowness of her waist. She stretched her limbs with a motion sinuously feline and looked at him through purple-shadowed eyes, mischievously flirting, beckoning to him.

Will Carma be able to arouse the sleeping devils in Myron or is his passion quelled for all time? And if so, now that her emotional nature has been aroused, will she be able to do without physical love and be content to remain Myron's wife "in name only?" See the June issue of PEP STORIES for the conclusion of this gripping story of the spell woven by exotic India over the heart of an American girl.



A cartoon of Norma Shearer, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer star, in the act of offering her heart

Peppy Plays and Pictures

Reviewed By FRANK ARMER

(Editor, Stage and Screen)



RE the films swamp-
ing Broadway?
That is a pertinent
question many peo-
ple are asking these
days. With seventy
legit theatres in the
Times Square dis-

trict not a single legitimate play is in a theatre on the west side of and on Broadway between 42nd to 53rd Streets. Some of the best locations for legit shows are now catering to pictures. The Astor and the Gaiety, heretofore crack playhouses are now featuring top-notch films at a \$2 top: *The Big Parade* and *King of Kings*.

Coming up from 42nd Street you hit The Rialto with special pictures running for several weeks at a time and then switching to another special when business begins to fall off. Opposite the Rialto is George M. Cohan's with *The Rough Riders*, also a special. This has been on for several weeks and booked for at least six more. On 42nd Street is Sam H. Harris' theatre, which formerly was legit exclusively. *What Price Glory* is parked there for as big a run if not bigger than *The Big Parade*.

The choicest spot in the Times Square section is the Paramount theatre, which has a weekly movie change at popular prices as has the Strand, on Broadway and 47th Street, the Capitol, two blocks up, Roxy's new cathedral dedicated to films, and the Hippodrome, now combining variety with a weekly movie.

The Rivoli which used to have a weekly change too, has now gone in for specials. *Old Ironsides* was camped there up till this week when *Beau Geste* was moved out of the Criterion and *Old Ironsides* installed there. Now at the Rivoli is another special *Chang* which is slated to run through the summer.

The Colony had been devoted to Vitaphone presentations until last week. It's now running a weekly movie change. Warner's is still running the Barrymore special *When a Man Loves*. This takes in all the theatres along Broadway with most of them carrying special pictures which means indefinite runs. The legit plays are being shoved further and further away from the bright lights. One legit house being over near 8th Avenue and Ziegfeld away up town at 54th Street and Sixth Avenue.





George Hassell, one of the funniest comedians on the stage today, now in "The Circus Princess" at the Winter Garden

\$2 and are forecast as being as popular as the plays. However, all things are possible and only time can work these problems out.

* * *

Well, since there are still several plays in town that these super pictures haven't done away with, we might give them the once-over.

Even in the legit we find changes coming where one least expects them. You who have been accustomed to the less formal forms of entertainment when visiting the Winter Garden, have a surprise in store. The Schuberts have taken this *coin d'arte* and for the first time lodged within its portals a peppy musical comedy. When we say "musical comedy" we are merely quoting the program. *The Circus Princess* is a brilliant operetta with an exquisite Viennese strain. The score has been written by Emmerich Kalman and the cast is one with enough pep to almost knock your eye out. The audience at every performance has difficulty in knowing just where to place the laurels. Guy Robertson has one of the finest singing voices outside of the concert stage and were it not for the fact that his efforts toward being theatrical somehow detracted from the enjoyment of his truly magnificent singing, we would not hesitate to wax more eloquent. Why will he insist upon extreme gesticulations?

Gloria Foy, Ted Doner and a group

With this rapid stride in the picture business, showmen are predicting special pictures in as many houses as legitimate shows. These specials run at

of clever Foster girls hold up the dancing end of the show. George Hassell and George Bickel take care of the comedy, and the extras, of which there are plenty in *The Circus Princess*, include such notables as Mr. Poodles Hanneford and his accomplished family. This man can do more things while falling off a horse's back than the ordinary person can do with his feet firmly planted on the ground. The Six Pachas, as Clowns, turn somersaults, the like of which you've seen nowhere before—not even at the Circus, and Bee Star performs prodigies in the air suspended from a rope. Desiree Taber plays opposite Guy Robertson and her vocal efforts met with much acclaim. She's an attractive blonde and looks as pretty as she sings. This should help considerably toward your enjoyment of the piece.

The story is about a Princess who falls in love with a circus rider. He masquerades as a Prince and they are married. Later he is exposed and after she denounces him, he proves that he is indeed a prince who took to the circus through financial difficulties.

If magnificent, romantic musical shows are the kind you enjoy in the hot summertime (and we know that that's the kind to our taste) well then *The Circus Princess* should be put away on top of your list.

* * *

We began by telling you about changes in the Theatre and it seems that everything we pick up fairly screams "novelty" at us. While we're talking about musical shows and



Louise Groody, lovely prima donna in "Hit the Deck" at the Belasco



Margalo Gillmore, who does an excellent piece of acting in S. N. Behrman's play, "The Second Man," at the Guild

musical show at the Belasco Theatre.

In case you haven't already discovered the novelty about this we'll tell you. This is the first time that a musical comedy has been presented at the Belasco theatre. This place was usually reserved for the more serious undertakings of La Belle Ulric. One suspects the reason for this is the fact that *Hit the Deck* has been boiled down from *Shore Leave* which Mr. Belasco produced many years ago with Frances Starr and James Rennie.

The score has been written by Vincent Youmans and the book by Herbert Fields, which means that you're going to hear several neat and classy numbers. The chorus is dressed effectively and yet modestly which should please the insistent censors and the lines pulled on the Navy are the kind you can take your mother to hear.

Louise Groody is the prima donna and is assisted by Charles King. Miss Groody can sing, dance and act as can Mr. King so they helped make this version of *Shore Leave* a most enjoyable one. Special billing is given Stella Mayhew and Madaline Cameron and they well deserve it.

As a comedian Miss Mayhew ranks with such favorites as Lulu McConnell and Frank McIntyre. She is cast as a colored cook and foster mother to Louise Groody who is the owner of a coffee shop near the docks and caters to sailors. Miss Groody as Loulou,

since at the present writing the U. S. Fleet happens to be parked all along the Hudson, it's timely to talk about *Hit the Deck*, a snappy, smart and pretty

falls in love with a gob who won't have anything to do with her because she's rich. He sails away to China and leaves Loulou heartbroken. Loulou decides to pack up shop and go after him, so she takes Lavina (that's Stella Mayhew) with her and goes in search of her errant lover.

Since the money scared him, she puts it in a trust fund for her first child provided she marries a sailor by the name of Bilge Smith (Charles King).

In China the hit of the play takes place when Miss Mayhew leads the show in a song called "Hallelujah." It seems as though nothing could stop this one. It's sung as a finale and later as a reprise with the entire cast singing it to beat the band.

Miss Cameron takes the part of a ritzy blue blood. In this role she wears her clothes well, dances like a flash and handles her lines with facility. She is particularly good in some black-bottoms and charlestons which she performs on the turret of the United States battleship "Broadway." She also scores in her rendition of the song, "Nothing Could Be Sweeter."

Miss Groody and Mr. King sing "Sometimes I'm Happy," and "Harbor of My Heart," exceptionally well. These two songs are sure to be hits.

There's pep galore in this piece and yet it manages to keep within the censor's bounds. This is good musical comedy stuff and will provide an excellent evening's entertainment.

A Night in Spain is undoubtedly a sequel to last season's *A Night in Paris*. It follows the same style



Betty Starbuck, who charms you completely in "Peggy Ann," at the Vanderbilt

Seen at the Movies



Lew Cody, popular Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer player, as seen by Bert Levy, the cartoonist.

[94]

merely substituting the Spanish strain for the Parisian. Book by Harold Atteridge; Music by Jean Schwartz, Lyrics by Al Byram; Staged by Gertrude Hoffmann and Charles Judels with the Gertrude Hoffmann girls and also the Allan K. Foster girls.

The cast includes such favorites as Ted Healy, George Price, Grace Hayes and George Anderson. They keep coming on and off in such rapidity and in so many different skits that it makes it difficult to keep track of them all. They're enjoyable—so what does it matter.

The opening number "Argentine" is a particularly effective one, sung by Grace Bowman with a group of Spanish Beauties and the Gertrude Hoffmann and Foster girls. Phil Baker's Raccooners are there to pep it up. They do!

This is an international revue along the usual lines which is aimed at the warm weather crowds. It's peppy, light entertainment with lots of good singing numbers, good dancers and clever artists supplying the comedy.



While it is customary for this department to select only those movies with verve and pep for your recommendation still *The King of Kings* is such a tremendous picture that few can afford not to see it. It is a tremendous picturization of the life of Christ.

It is a lesson which all creeds and all ages will do well to study. Cecil B.

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Norma Talmadge, as she appears in her latest super-special picture, "Camille," at the Globe

Crucifixion of Christ is in itself a triumph. The storm which is pictured at this time is indeed a novelty in picturedom.

Of course to anyone who is not very familiar with the facts of the Bible, this is bound to be a jumble and yet each point is so carefully depicted as to provide the very finest of entertainment despite a knowledge of or rather a lack of knowledge of the accuracy of facts set forth.

The picture is bound to stir up argument because of its terrific force. It is not a picture that you can run in to see and then take yourself off to a night club after it. It awes you and silences you by its sheer beauty.

Jesus, the Christ, is played by H. B. Warner, with marked perfection. Just once or twice, and at that it is in keeping with the tone of the picture, does Mr. Warner become theatrical. Judas is played by Joseph Schildkraut and Mary Magdalene by Jacqueline Logan.

This picture is one which everyone should see. It's extraordinary entertainment and Mr. De Mille and his associates should be proud of this spectacle.

* * *

At almost the same time that *The King of Kings* opened on Broadway, Miss Norma Talmadge came to the Globe in *Camille*, a very special spe-

DeMille is to be congratulated upon this daring undertaking and his masterly manipulation of a truly difficult task. The scene which depicts the

cial. Fred Niblo directed Miss Talmadge in a modern version of Dumas' book which affords Norma the opportunity of looking more beautiful and acting as she has never acted before.

Here indeed is real screen personality. While Miss Talmadge is on the screen the picture does not lag one iota. There is really nothing left to the trite tale of the demi-mondaine who is driven out of her home into the arms of a very rich lover. She takes many a step along the primrose path until she meets her one and only love, Armand (Gilbert Rowland). She gives up her fast life and goes with him to a cottage in the country. His father comes and persuades her to give him up. When Armand returns and finds Camille gone, he believes she has gone back to her first lover. It is only after she dies that he learns she had been faithful to him to the end.

A tragic end for the exquisite Norma and one which you regret, but in this, the continuity man has remained faithful to the book.

The gowns, the scenes and the characters in the film are recorded by Fred Niblo with expert direction. It is a fine picture and one that will probably please all the members of the family.

* * *

Chang at the Rivoli is a gripping story of the jungle. It is primarily an animal picture with the story interest worked in as secondary. The views of the jungle are unusual and breathtaking. Particularly noteworthy is



Laura La Plante, Universal star, who is rapidly rising to the heights of screen popularity

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